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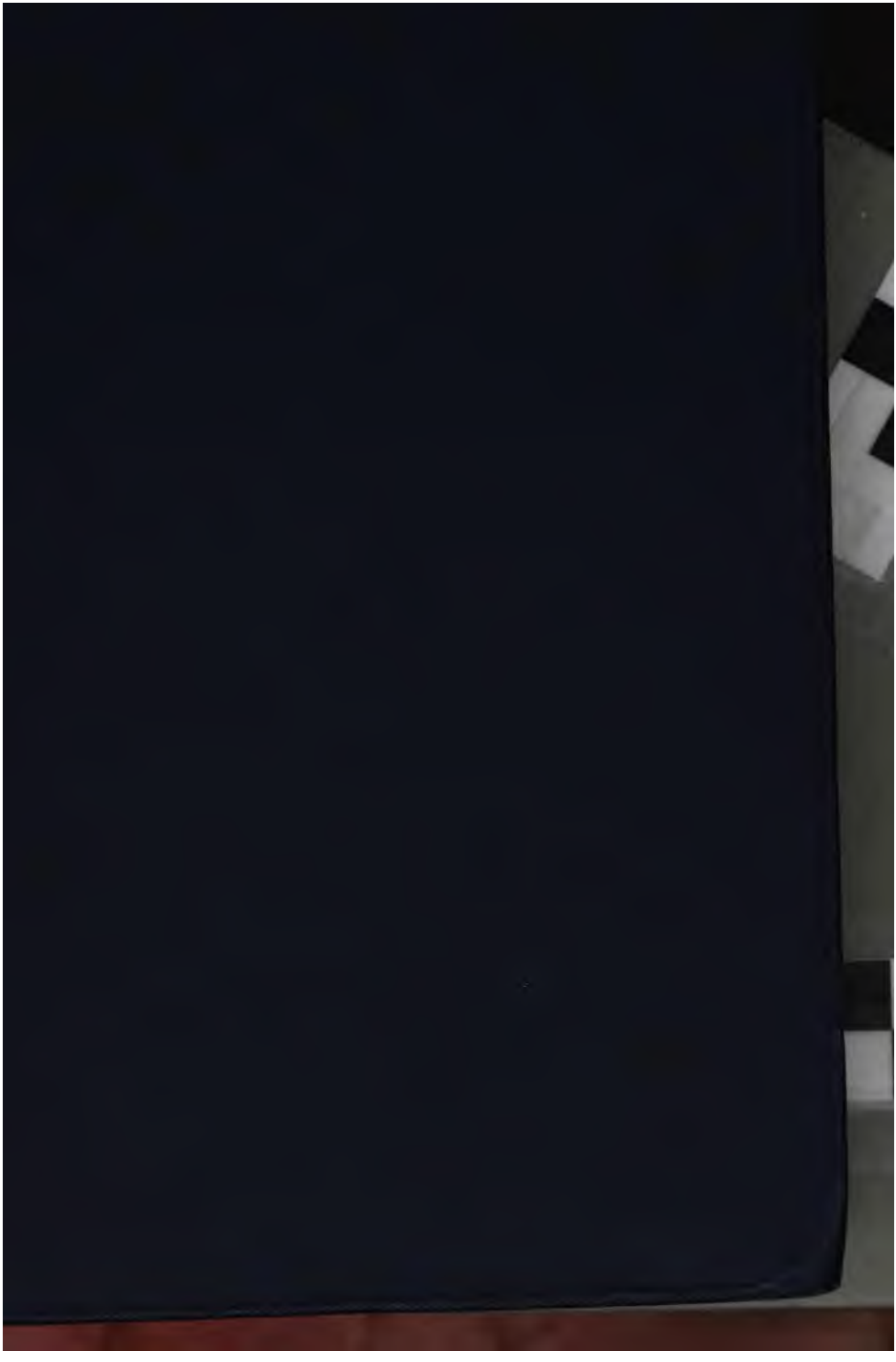

Augustus S. Jackson.

Dec 3rd 94

THE

WITNESS TO IMMORTALITY
IN LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE

BY

GEORGE A. GORDON

MINISTER OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON

Καὶ παρὰ δόξαν πολλὰ πολλοῖς δὴ ἐγένετο

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DEDICATED TO

MY MOTHER AND MY WIFE:

TO THE FIRST, IN SACRED REMEMBRANCE
OF A SUPREMELY RELIGIOUS SOUL
AND IN GLAD CONFESSION
OF UNSPEAKABLE FILIAL OBLIGATIONS AND JOYS;
TO THE SECOND, IN HONOR AND GRATITUDE
FOR AN INSPIRING FRIENDSHIP;
TO BOTH
IN UNBROKEN AND DEAREST ASSOCIATION
AND IN ETERNAL HOPE.

PREFACE.

THE purpose of this unpretending book is one of mediation between the minds to which, in the nature of the case, few can have access and the multitude who long to know the best that has been said on the problems of life. Gathered about all the great subjects of human interest are the treasures of insight and thought bequeathed by the supreme spirits of the race. If the wisdom already in the world, however far it may fall short of the desirable or ideal, could be put at the service of the people and easily within their reach, how much stronger and braver the average human being might become! This conviction is indeed the impulse behind much of the most useful literary work of the age; and we can never be too grateful to Matthew Arnold for his insistence upon the duty of cultivated men to spread the knowledge of the highest minds among the people, and for his apostolic zeal in urging the application of the noblest ideas to life. Democracy has

at last found its way into the world of thought, and the kings in that sphere, as in the political, must be made to rule for the public good. It is quite true that a few books out of each generation must necessarily be addressed to the learned. The original thinking of the world, that by which new epochs are created and from which fresh departures in the mental habit of the race proceed, can never be overtaken by the mass of mankind without the intervention of the expositor and teacher. And yet these are the very books which, in their grand accumulation with the lapse of the centuries, the people most need to know. The question, therefore, of mediation between these high sources of ideal strength and the thousands of busy men and women who may not have the time or the courage to go themselves to the masters of human thought, is one of ever-increasing importance.

Out of considerations like these this little book has grown. Having found strength and cheer in the greater thoughts of the world upon the problem of personal existence after death, the author felt that perhaps some slight service might be done to others concerned over this momentous question, if he should try, not indeed to write a colorless history of opinion, but to ascertain

through sympathetic exposition the worth of some of the deeper insights and reasonings of the men who have become the accepted masters of the race beyond the peradventure of displacement.

If "the man without a country" is in a pitiable plight, the person without a history is in even a more lamentable condition; inasmuch as contemporaneous life is as nothing when set against the life of the past. Compared with what he has learned from his predecessors and measured against the sum total of the attainment of mankind, the originality of the greatest genius is infinitesimal. The greater spirits have ever had a vast historic consciousness, and the stream of time has been for them an immeasurable inspiration. The strength and courage of life would seem largely to consist — except, perhaps, for the few pioneer minds who come with a fresh impulse derived without intervention from the heart of the Infinite, and who give to future development a new direction — in openness to the voices of history, in the capacity of becoming the host of the ideas that the past has discovered and tested, and the servant of the forces that have shaped the higher character of men in the previous ages of the world. History beats against each new genera-

tion of human ignorance as, with each new day, the morning sun assails the shuttered home, and it is the privilege of those who put themselves in league with light to make the human mind accessible to the glory of the past, so that its physical counterpart shall no longer be the "long house" of barbarism, or the windowless castle of feudal times, but the transparent dwelling of these later and happier days. The ancient and august words, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," will never have their full weight until the Divine voice is heard along the highways of history, caught by the loftier spirits of the race and passed onward through their resonant humanity, touching the individual soul with the original utterance of God all but completely blended with the grand responses and reverberations of the grateful heart of mankind.

The general aim of this volume is to encourage serious men and women, upon whom is laid much of the care of keeping the world of to-day in movement, to a wider and richer historic consciousness; while the special purpose is, as has already been remarked, to strengthen this sense of the worth of the past along a particular line.

The author has noted in the progress of the dis-

cussion his indebtedness to different writers, but he is aware that his deepest obligations are to his teachers in Harvard University, who first broke for him a path into the splendid forest of historic thought. He refrains from writing their names here, because he does not wish to seem to claim their high authority in support of a book necessarily so far removed from the dignity of an academic treatise. The course of opinion reviewed has been the subject of meditation from that time to this, and the hope is cherished that it may tempt others to pass on over it to the great thinkers themselves; for even if the exposition should seem a sort of Jacob's ladder illusion, and utterly needless to the winged spirits who go easily between earth and sky, it may still serve to convince a dreamer here and there that the spot whereon he sleeps is holy ground, and that it is in union with the highest heaven.

GEO. A. GORDON.

OLD SOUTH PARSONAGE, BOSTON.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY: DEFINITION AND METHOD.

"The prize is noble and the venture is great." — PLATO.

"After life's battle — 'God, like a good general, sounds the recall.'" — ARRIAN, Book III. p. 350.

"Glory to God for all things." — Last words of CHRYSOSTOM.

"To think, then, that we are honoring the resurrection by dishonoring the expectations of immortality which men in the foregone ages had derived from one source or another, is surely monstrous. Supposing they were only the guesses of half a dozen earnest and thoughtful men, would these guesses be confounded and not established by the later discovery? Does any scientific man scoff at Galileo or Copernicus, because they had adopted a conclusion which Newton proved?

"It is not true that those who brought forward these arguments for immortality were opposing themselves to the rest of the world. *They were trying to justify a belief.*" — F. D. MAURICE, *Sermons*, vol. iii. pp. 261, 262.

"Here, then, a great lesson is impressed upon us, that our duty as Christians lies in this, in making ventures for eternal life without the absolute certainty of success." — J. H. NEWMAN, Sermon on *The Ventures of Faith.*

THE WITNESS TO IMMORTALITY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY: DEFINITION AND METHOD.

In presenting the main considerations that support belief in the existence of the soul after death, it is taken for granted that life is desirable. The initial and necessary assumption of the discussion conducted in this book is, that since life is good, whatever supports faith in its continuance beyond the grave must be regarded as of supreme moment. If life is a boon, immortality must be a blessing; but if life is simply a burden and a misery, immortality must become, not an object of desire and hope, but of aversion and dread. Let life part forever with zest, and the old question will come:

> "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery,
> And life unto the bitter in soul;
> Which long for death, and it cometh not;
> Which dig for it more than for hid treasures;
> Which rejoice exceedingly,
> And are glad, when they can find the grave?" [1]

[1] Job iii. 20–22.

There is therefore fundamental meaning in the apostolic characterization of Christ as one "who brought life and immortality to light."[1] Life true, full, and inspired, rising out of the order of God in the home, in society, and in the church; fed from the fountains of domestic fidelity, human brotherhood, and divine sonship; from the heart of love and sympathy and faith; redeemed from self-seeking to self-sacrifice, wrought over into new quality and raised to new values; enriched with great interests, in the service of great ends, in fellowship with all great souls in all worlds visible and invisible; life as of infinite worth and infinite privilege; that is the first and great revelation. The second, that which discovers the deathlessness of life, becomes then of supreme importance.

There is a remark in a comedy of Aristophanes, which I have often thought symbolic. A certain dead man is being carried out for burial. He is somehow understood to be aware of what is going on. There is made to him a certain proposition; he is invited to do a certain thing, and his comic answer is, "I'd rather be alive again."[2] The worst that could be said of a thing was to hint that it was even worse than coming back to life. That best of witticisms has often seemed to me an opening into very sad meanings. Life in that old world was so burdened. Its standards were

[1] 2 Timothy i. 10. [2] *The Frogs.*

so low, its embarrassments so great, its satisfactions so slight. It seemed a mistake to be born, a privilege to be dead. It was not that life had hard tasks, but because it had no high compensations, no dream of gain through loss, of the birth of the higher life through the decay of the lower, to cheer it on. Doubtless there were great exceptions; the reference is to the common feeling. Of that feeling the comic answer of the dead man in the play, "I'd rather be alive again," has always seemed to me the pathetic symbol. The worst that could be said of anything was to imply that it was even worse than a return to life.[1]

The common remark among ourselves, "I had rather die," illustrates the happier age in which we live. Here death is the evil and life is the good. We are still under the same law, and the struggle for existence still goes on; but the struggle has been informed with vaster meanings. Life has been inspired with new zest and filled with hopes that keep the spirit buoyant. It has at its heart, in a crude instinctive way indeed, the

[1] The following is an example of a different character: "We are like leaves which the flowering spring-time brings forth; when of a sudden they grow beneath the rays of the sun; for a span so brief do we rejoice in the flowers of youth . . . but the black fates stand by, the one with the doom of doleful age, the other with the doom of death. . . . When once the appointed time of youth is past better to die forthwith than to live." Mimnermus, Frag. 2, quoted from "The Melancholy of the Greeks" in S. H. Butcher's *Aspects of Greek Genius*. See the whole essay.

Platonic faith that to the friend of God "all things will end in good either in life or in death," [1] and the Apostolic assurance that "All things work together for good to them that love God." [2] Life in our time is founded upon optimism; the worst thing is to be dropped from existence, and the best is to be forever renewed in being.

In these remarks the reference is to the popular feeling; that there are exceptions to it in high places I am well aware. James Mill judged life a poor thing at best "after the freshness of youth and of unsatisfied curiosity had gone by." [3] His nobler and more accomplished son at one time thought that immortality and not annihilation might be the dreadful thing.[4] But he modified that judgment under the inspiration of a supreme affection and in the presence of death. A German writer of note has said that the last enemy to be destroyed is not death, but man's belief in his immortality. In Germany there are large groups of pessimists that preach, with an earnestness almost fanatical, the gospel of annihilation. Still, the tone of philosophic thought in general is against all that, and the tone of science is against it. Science and philosophy are becoming more and more evolutionary, and the evolutionary process has ever a hope set before it. It shows the race advancing by a power that has enabled it

[1] *Republic*, 613.
[2] Romans viii. 28.
[3] J. S. Mill, *Autobiography*, p. 48.
[4] *Essays on Religion*, p. 122.

already to shake off innumerable burdens and compass inexpressible blessing. Evolution is a sort of philosophy of redemption, and is therefore inspired by a vast hope. The casting aside of brutehood and the assumption of manhood; that is the great process which more and more makes existence a privilege. On the whole, the science and the philosophy of the time are true to the popular heart that life is good and death alone an evil.

This consciousness of the preciousness of existence is the necessary background to our picture. We set in the foreground the immortal life, and the picture is complete. We try to supply something longed for, something demanded, and we work in the interest of the noble desires and expectations of the human heart. That the longing for life beyond the grave is noble has been, indeed, sometimes denied; it has been described as originating in human conceit, and as supported by nothing stronger or worthier than human vanity.

That the wish for life after death may be ignoble is doubtless true. The nature whose wishes are chiefly selfish when turned upon things here will have the same unworthy character when turned upon things hereafter. That the longing for immortal life is necessarily selfish is utterly untrue. Among good people the thought of the future life is precious, not primarily on their own account, but on account of their dead whom they

cannot bear to think of as lost to existence. A true man does not fear death for himself, but for his friends; it is not his own grave that is dreadful, but the grave of those whom he loves. Many a weary mortal would gladly lie down and cease to be, yet he cannot endure that as the fate of those dear to him. There are moods when extinction of being would be welcome to ourselves, but the time never comes when we are willing that our dearest should pass out of existence. The sacrifice would be not simply a loss to us; we feel that it would be likewise a loss to God. Very often we value ourselves lightly enough, but those whom we truly love we set above all price. Not what becomes of us when we die, but what becomes of them when they die is the great question of human love. In health, in work, with his home uninvaded, Carlyle turns the question out of doors; when the awful solitude came and the bitter self-accusation and the infinitely significant sorrow, he reconsiders and concludes to trust God for the vision of his vanished ones again. In the interest of love, Emerson, Tennyson, and Browning sing of the endless life; and indeed the longing for immortality, when it takes this direction, brings into prominence the noblest side of our nature. We so value, not ourselves, but our beloved dead, that we cannot think of them as lost to us, lost to the universe, lost to God.

The desire for what in New Testament phrase is called eternal life cannot be selfish, and that is the true form of the longing for perpetuated existence. That life is first of all a life of supernatural excellence, existence lifted into the richest fellowships, receiving and imparting the bright effluence of love that forever goes forth from the heart of God. Is it selfish for me to wish that I may live to do good, continue in being in this world that I may rise into greater excellence, and wield an influence more benign upon my fellowmen? Is the wish for life in time, in the interest of exalted character and work, selfish? Are aspiration, prayer, the purpose and endeavor of love selfish? Surely we are in utter confusion when we think so. Only when my being is utterly in the way of the universal good can it be unworthy for me to wish to continue in being. So long as I pray for the peace and work for the prosperity of the whole, so long as I have a true wish in my heart for mankind and an emotion of joy over the good that is coming to it, I cannot be utterly in the way; much less when I become more and more, what it is my nature to become, the servant of the universal life, the minister to the fullness of the vast society of rational and spiritual beings whose bond and inspirer is God.

That men should refuse to believe in the future life, because they think that belief contrary to fact, is entirely intelligible and manly. That they

should regard the surrender of the immortal life as an exhibition of superior unselfishness is, I confess, something that I cannot comprehend. George Eliot's famous lines have been understood as the utterance of one who supplies a nobler substitute for the discarded motive drawn from conscious existence after death: —

> "Oh may I join the choir invisible
> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence; live
> In pulses stirred to generosity,
> In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
> For miserable aims that end with self,
> In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
> And with their mild persistence urge man's search
> To vaster issues. So to live is heaven."

This passage is considered the summit of altruism, the classic expression of the sublime morality of a being in renunciation of conscious future existence. It is indeed a magnificent passage, and well deserves its place of honor in human memory. I fear, however, that the immortal longing is repressed in one form only to find vent in another. What is this "choir invisible?" Is it a mere dream of the poet, and is the fact simply so much dust and ashes blown about the world? Is the spiritual presence only an effect in the life of the world? If this be so, why use for it such personal form? The form will not allow personality to perish; it is a vast choir of living men and women that fills the singer's imagination;

theirs is a real society, and they still have beholding eyes and feeling hearts, "whose music is the gladness of the world." They compose a real, a sublime, although an invisible fellowship; and the hope of at length joining that fellowship is the noblest utterance of the longing for immortal life. That life is thus denied only in words; it is there in full power, in absolute mastery of this gifted and aspiring spirit. The conscious existence of the mighty dead is ignored only in form; it is there in invisible but immortal bloom. The nature that loves goodness, as George Eliot's certainly did, and at the same time tries in the interest of goodness to dispense with the endless life is overreaching itself. What is repressed in one way finds utterance in another; like the clergyman in the anecdote, who refused food to every beggar at the door, only to repent and throw it out after him at the window. It is well to make the most of what remains, and this George Eliot meant to do; but in so doing she ideally restored all that in fact she had abandoned. Thus inseparable are the ideas of exalted human worth and endless life.

The utility of a discussion, such as is here entered upon, is often questioned. To a man as certain of his future as of his present existence, the consideration must seem needless; still, confidence in things of this order, like the stock-market, is subject to sudden and great variations.

Beliefs that are well assured one day may be somewhat uncertain the next. In fine weather, that the ship is seaworthy is clear to the most inexperienced passenger. It is the storm that begets uneasiness, the presence of danger that creates doubt, the possibility of disaster that awakens the desire for the confidence of reason. Cromwell's great question on his death-bed, whether once a Christian means always a Christian, is not the most fundamental. The question of Job is deeper, "If a man die shall he live again?" That is humanity's question in the presence of death. If great interests are at stake, if the heart stored with love is threatened with everlasting loss, the reason must search for an answer, must revive the old answers, and seek for fresh assurance from them. One day in his old age, Dr. Lyman Beecher remarked, "I have been reviewing my evidences, and I conclude that I have a right to hope." After the allowance that should be made for a type of mind somewhat morbid, Lyman Beecher's mood must ever be the mood of thoughtful men. We must review our evidences, those that are speakable and those that are unspeakable; for it is the vision of evidence that carries conviction and comfort home to the heart. The considerations that support faith in the immortal life are a source of inexpressible strength and cheer to those whose pathway must henceforth lie in the deep shadow of bereavement.

I am not unmindful of the fact, or ungrateful for it, that confidence in the future life has become a habit, one might almost say an inveterate habit; and I look upon this as one of the immeasurable blessings of a Christian civilization. The great and consoling fact is that the hand of our faith is stronger upon us than ours upon it. Our beliefs, in their elements, are the inevitable effects in consciousness of the action upon us of the Divine Reality. Out of nature, out of life, instinctively come the "mighty hopes that make us men." Our deliberations about them, important as they are and effective over character as they must be, are still insignificant in comparison with the vaster influence of Christian nurture, inherited mental habit, and proclivity. As vital force Christianity is rooted in the world's life, and unless cut down it grows inevitably into great beliefs and blossoms into immortal hopes. Wordsworth has said that Goethe's poetry is not inevitable enough, and the criticism has been recognized as valid. Faith is open to the same criticism. It is never at its best when it is not inevitable. No man can look into the faith of these Christian centuries, into the faith of to-day, without perceiving in it something of this great quality. We have come into being through a long history of Christian culture, and so find in ourselves a faith tendency, with something of the movement and certainty of natural forces. Still, whether this habit shall seem

reasonable and valid or the result of blind feeling, whether this vast and precious inheritance shall be conserved through rational activity or lost through thoughtless disregard, is something that every man is called upon in the great exigencies of life to decide.

What is our problem? Not the completed proof of the immortal life, for that is impossible; impossible, because we are considering a future event. God only hath immortality; he alone is the absolute, set free from the limitations of time. The impossibility of proving a future event holds of nature equally with the soul. It is impossible to prove that the tides will ebb and flow to-morrow, that the sun will rise and set as to-day, that the heavenly bodies will appear in their accustomed places, that the order of the physical universe will remain undisturbed, that the kosmos itself will endure through another four and twenty hours. It is impossible to prove this, because we know not what a day may bring forth. The uniformity of nature is not something that we know, but something that we have assumed. That things will continue as they are we take for granted, and on that basis we predict the mornings and the evenings that shall be all time. For events in nature that lie in the future, prediction is the word, not proof. Prediction is the word in any discussion or consideration of immortality. The event of death alone can furnish the utter refutation, or

the complete demonstration of the belief. All reasonings conducted in advance of the fact are of the nature of prophecy. It is precisely like the forecast of the course and duration of the storm. The soul is sighted, the scope of its nature is noted, the direction of its movement, the conditions in its path that may swell the volume of its life, its likelihood to gather force as it goes on, to oversweep the grave, and traverse not simply time, but eternity. The prediction may be based on good and sufficient grounds, and issue in a conviction rising to moral certainty. I am certain of many things that I cannot prove. I believe in the existence of Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem, cities that I have never seen, and I believe on the testimony of others, yet men are often false. It is only God who cannot lie, whose truth is given with his existence. Robert Hall is therefore open to the sarcasm of Carlyle's friend when he attempts to *prove* that God cannot lie. "As good prove that God never fought a duel!"[1] I have not the slightest doubt that Hannibal, Cæsar, and Napoleon lived, and my certainty is produced by history, and history is recorded human testimony; and again, men are often false. I cannot prove that the friend I have known these many years, and whom I have reverenced more profoundly the more deeply I have seen into his heart, — I cannot prove that this friend whom I wholly honor and

[1] *Reminiscences*, vol. ii. p. 151.

trust will not lie. But I am morally certain that he will not. This, at least, is the possible form of conviction into which the consideration of the evidence for immortal life may bring us. The relationship between God and man may stand out in such clearness and worth, and the fellowship between God and man may be so lofty and intimate, as to fill the mind with the conviction of its permanence to the exclusion of doubt.

What is to be our mental attitude toward the problem just stated? That of believers in immortality; and I am confident that this is the better way. Love discovers the secrets of life better than indifference or despair; and sympathy gives insight. There is no extant biography good for anything that is not the product of sympathy. Plato as biographer, even in the heart of his Platonism, has preserved the living and majestic image of Socrates, his great teacher. We owe the powerful and impressive picture to the pupil's love and reverence; and had he not been fascinated into a profound faith in Socrates, he could not have seen so deeply into that great soul, nor could he have framed for the world an image so life-like and adequate. The author of the fourth Gospel has preserved the image of his Master, and again the picture is framed in by his own meditations and reflections; still the Christ is there as nowhere else. It is the interpretation of a sympathetic soul; the embodied vision of a

pure and loving heart. The great scientists are all lovers, — Kepler, Copernicus, Newton, and Darwin; and from the clear-eyed and long-suffering activity of love the great body of ascertained facts and the deductions that are properly made from them, which we call science, have come into existence. The great artist sees more in nature than other men, because he is a more intense and patient lover. When the vision tarries, he waits for it; other men do not. For centuries, generation after generation of scholars passed by the hieroglyphs on Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, as if they were marks with no meaning, till at length men like Botta, Layard, and Rawlinson came; men over whom antiquity cast her indefinable charm, whom she transformed into lovers of the forgotten civilizations in the world's dim beginnings; students who were arrested by the strange signs, and felt that here was a clew to the life of a world that had gone into oblivion. The longer they looked upon the mysterious characters the vaster the image that stood out behind them. They were drawn into boundless sympathy with those vanished races, and out of that sympathy came the persistent guesses that ended in discovery. It was awe in the presence of vast antiquity, sympathy with the humanity of a forgotten time, that divined the value of these remains, that inspired the power and the patience that deciphered them. Love has thus recovered a

lost world. The illustration hardly needs application. It is love that spells out the obscure but mighty meanings of life; that lingers in the presence of the great order of human existence, until the confusions that settle down upon it, like thick clouds, lift and roll away; that waits by the vast relational structure of being, human and divine, until guesses at its high import become discoveries. It is love that ascertains the weight of duty and discovers the path to freedom. The facts of human life are symbols. For unloving eyes they have no meaning or only a slight one; but for the inspired heart they shine with celestial significance. It is the loving and reverent heart that joins fact to fact and symbol to symbol, that frames these signs into a sentence, that translates the sentence in terms of everlasting life.

The question of immortality may be approached along various lines of investigation.

1. It may be approached from the position of science. From what we have here, we may infer what we should expect hereafter. In the common acceptation of the term science has to do with the sphere of sense, with the facts of outward experience, and with the laws that may be deduced from these facts. The sciences of chemistry, physics, geology, and astronomy, all have to do with the world that comes through the senses. This world is to science the great object of regard and study.

From the conclusions of science about this world and our relation to it, we may infer what we are to expect beyond death. To the question of a future life for the soul science has three distinct answers. Impossible; that is the first answer. George Eliot represents this extreme position in her famous assertion about God, Duty, and Immortality: "God how inconceivable, Duty how absolute, Immortality how impossible!" This view is pure assumption, and its assertions are sheer dogmatism. The only semblance of proof furnished in support of it is the well-established fact that so far as we know brain and mind in this world always act in interdependence. Were this not so, there would be no problem. That in this world brain and mind are never separate does not prove that hereafter they may not be; unseparated does not equal inseparable. Brain and soul are in this life unseparated; that is the fact, and beyond that fact skeptical science cannot with justice proceed. That brain and consciousness are absolutely inseparable is pure and worthless assumption.

There is no evidence either way; that is the second scientific answer. This is the position taken by John Stuart Mill.[1] From his point of view no one could argue the case with more fairness. There are many who believe in immortality who still accept Mill's position as the

[1] *Essays on Religion*, p. 203.

strictly scientific one. Mill himself makes room for hope.

The third answer is that inspired by evolution. Man is nature's highest product, and he is a product of inconceivable cost. Toward him Nature has been looking forward from a past indefinitely remote. When she was concerned chiefly with the dance of atoms, with the play of the primitive fiery mist, she had the thought of him in her great heart; when she was elaborating worlds, setting the solar order on high, forming this planet of ours and preparing it for life, man was still her darling idea, and in the vast procession of life from the barely to the highly organized, he was never for one moment out of sight. The evolution, running through countless ages, in innumerable forms, at a cost of energy and suffering inconceivably great, was all the while aspiring to manhood. The whole creation groaned and travailed in pain until the manifestation of the sons of God. Man is Nature's last and costliest work. The flower of being is intelligence and love. The outcome of evolution through self-seeking is a form of being that confronts self-seeking as no longer an indispensable friend, but a disastrous embarrassment, that begins through self-sacrifice a yet more stupendous evolution.[1] Can it be that this last and finest product of Nature, this result of intelligence and love aimed at from the beginning

[1] John Fiske, *Destiny of Man*, p. 96.

and reached at a cost immeasurable, shall not be conserved in growing beauty and power forever? Physical evolution finds its goal in man, and the process that hereupon begins finds its end in the complete realization of his ethical and spiritual nature. In either case "the end of the process cannot be identified with the process."[1] This is the latest construction put upon evolutionary thought, and as the legitimate interpretation of a science once deemed hostile to faith it is indeed notable. It should not seem strange, however, that scientific men are found in this position. A far greater number of them than is commonly supposed entertain faith in the future life, and not a few are incited to belief and supported in it by the amazing facts with which they are called upon habitually to deal. Scientific men are not always forward to confess their faith, but I believe that not infrequently this reserve is maintained for noble reasons. Orthodox opinions are still a considerable aid to worldly advancement, and Satan still shoots his question at the believer, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" The reticence of scientific men is sometimes, at least, in the interest of a pure heart, in vindication of the truth that the religious life is its own exceeding great reward, and in utter and indignant refutation of Satan's sneer. The late Professor de Morgan, logician, mathematician, and philosopher, does not

[1] T. T. Munger, *The Appeal to Life*, p. 243.

stand alone when, in a memorandum found after his death, he declares his assured faith in Christianity, and gives as the motive for holding his belief in reserve the fact that religious professions are still employed as the means of self-advancement. To minds of such rectitude and honor it is no wonder that the world of science should make amazing revelations.

2. The method of psychology may be employed. The two great facts in mental life are change and permanence. There is a stream of thought and there is something in the stream that overlooks it, that is fixed. These are not theories, but facts. There is such a thing as self-identity. We recognize the truth when one speaks as follows: I am the same person to-day that I was twenty years ago. Memory gives me the person of that time and the person of yesterday, and consciousness gives me the person of this moment. I recognize at once that all three are one and the same. Meanwhile great changes have come, — circumstantial, physical, educational, spiritual. Yet I remain essentially the same. I give unity to my own wide-extending and heterogeneous life. I give unity to my knowledge; it is organized by me. Without this personal self there could be no knowledge, no rational consciousness, and it may be that this permanent and mighty self, surviving as it does all changes and profiting by them in insight and character, may outlast the

great change of death, and gather inconceivable riches from that momentous event. The advance may be made along this line.

3. The philosophical method may be used. Man's place in the sum of things may be considered, his essentialness or unessentialness to the universe in its highest character; his relation to duty, responsibility, and judgment; man as a being of ideals, as a candidate for membership in an ideal society. These considerations have an immense range. We shall see hereafter that the impression they have made upon the highest minds has been deep and permanent. They are philosophical in their nature, and constitute another line of approach to our great theme.

4. Still another way into the heart of the subject is the theological.[1] This method begins with the existence of God; it takes God as premise, and immortality as conclusion. If God is good,

[1] A friend kindly sent me the following anecdote from his own experience: Presenting a course of thought on "The Immortality of the Soul," he was approached very early in the course by a Scotch parishioner, whose condition of semi-intoxication added to the effectiveness of his mental operations, and who remarked, "You make a deal ado over a sma' matter; postulate God and immortality follows." In this connection the argument of Rousseau, another, if not intoxicated yet swift and effective nature: "I believe in God as fully as I believe in any other truth. If God exists, he is perfect; if he is perfect, he is wise, almighty, and just; if he is just and almighty, my soul is immortal." — Professor Caird, *Literature and Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 132.

if God is our Father, we shall live forever; that is its logic. Of all the methods thus far mentioned this is the best, and the results to which it leads are, I believe, the soundest and most trustworthy. If the method which I prefer did not include this, I certainly should not adopt it. The most reasonable view that can be entertained, that which explains most, leaves least unexplained, and provides for complete explanations at last, is that the universe has a creator and sustainer, this world a ruler and Lord, the nations of the earth a governor and judge, and men individually a Heavenly Father and Friend. The strongest consideration in favor of immortality, therefore, is that it is an essential part of this order of thought, that it is bound up with this interpretation of the world's life, that it belongs of necessity to this philosophy of the universe. If God is the premise, immortality must be the conclusion.

5. The method of literature still remains. It is the sum of all the other modes of approach. It includes the scientific, the psychological, the philosophical, and the theological, besides making a contribution of its own. I adopt it for its comprehensiveness, its humanness, and its vitality. It brings us to the great ideas of the leaders of mankind upon this subject in a variety of forms. All these are of high interest and value.

Literature in its noblest form is one vast monument to the worth of human life; indeed, interest

in life and reverence for it lie at the heart of exalted genius. Without them the noblest work would be impossible. The sin, the error, and the suffering; the love, the struggle, and the hope of humanity have in them an infinite depth of meaning. The willfulness that runs headlong against the eternal order of justice, the blindness that encounters the great forces that work through life, the distress and sorrow that come of these, are not simply tragic, they are terrible with high meanings. The struggle that tries to work over from the weaker to the stronger side, that surrenders indefensible positions in the retreat upon those that are inexpugnable, the hope that paints upon the future the splendid promise of victory, the great and quenchless fires of love; these are not simply grand, pathetic, beautiful, they have in them an unfathomable import. In the reverent love of these unfathomable meanings literature works, and this homage of literature to life is a supreme attestation to the worth of human existence. In this broad sense literature has a most important bearing upon the question of immortality. I confine myself, however, to literature in the narrower sense, to that which deals directly with the subject before us, or that has to do with it by necessary implication.

Literature may be sampled, and its utterance upon our theme may be regarded as the highest wisdom that the race has thus far attained. There-

fore, before any individual point of view can with propriety be indicated, we must hear what the literature of our subject has to say in the person of its great representatives.

We have the idea of immortality. Whence came it? Whence come all our ideas? That question has exercised the profoundest intellect of modern Europe, and to good purpose. Our ideas result from the combination of sense and reason. The mind is an architect, and brings with it its own plan. Out of the materials given in sense, according to its own plan, reason builds the world. There are, however, in reason ideas that have never found realization in sense; the ideas of God, Duty, and Immortality.

The idea of God has been held to be God's self-impression upon the human reason, and this seems to me essentially true. Reality casts its own image in the mind, and God as Reality has shadowed Himself in the soul. There is no adequate account of the idea of God other than the fact of God. Similarly with duty, it is an ultimate fact; there is no complete explanation of it, short of its recognition as the effect in man's spirit of moral law.

The idea of immortality belongs with those of God and duty. It comes spontaneously, because of a perceived, invisible, and spiritual order to which the soul belongs. There is an instinctive feeling of kinship between that order and the

human spirit. Upon the human spirit that order makes the impression that its home is eternal in the heavens.

This great idea of immortality, because of its momentousness, men have sought to justify. They have busied themselves with the conditions that make it possible and precious. They have brought the highest in life to the discovery of its content. They have entered into the proof of its validity. They have sought for it, as in the case of the Apostle Paul, on a basis of fact. My purpose is to follow the course of thought of some of these great souls, to study the Hebrew seers, who deal with the conditions that make faith in the future life possible and precious; to consider the great poets in whose imagination the idea of immortal life takes on richness and credibility; to look at the philosophers who have sought to vindicate it; to examine the reasonings of the Apostle Paul upon the basis of fact; to discover, if possible, the contribution made through his teaching and his experience by Jesus Christ to belief in the life after death. At the close of this study we may be able to understand what it means to take immortality on trust.

Sir Walter Scott's last entry in his Journal, recently published, reads, "We slept reasonably, but on the next morning"— The sentence is unfinished and it is impossible to gather its full import. We know that the night's rest was rea-

sonably good; but what the morning brought, what ideas it suggested, what feelings it awakened, what experiences it provided, we cannot tell. "But on the next morning"—there is no meaning there; Scott's mind cannot be found in it; the words are an enigma whose significance can never be known. Human life without an endless future is such a sentence. Part of it is clear; the earthly side of life, its appetites, its occupations, its ambitions and recreations are reasonably plain. Existence on that lower level is tolerable; it is not bad; it is better than nothing. It is, like the sleep of the overworked brain of the great novelist, reasonably good, and it will do. But what of the whole range of life which finds its image in the unfinished clause "on the next morning"? What of the side of life that bows down in the reverence of duty, that looks to the Highest for the forms of being it would put on, that longs to become the servant of all precious and imperishable things? What of life's deep and beautiful relations, and its dear and deathless loves? What of the bright spirit that beholds the ideal of a world redeemed, that becomes co-worker with all renewing and transfiguring powers, that anticipates the communion of saints, that builds its life into the world's best hope? This is the morning side of existence, the new day that rises upon the darkness of mere earthly aptitude and desire. What of all this? It is a mystery and a mockery if

death be the end. If death be the end the sentence of life is unfinished, and it is broken off where thought is gathering into greatest moment, where feeling is breaking into effulgent utterance. "We slept reasonably, but on the next morning,"— thus incomplete, unintelligible, and pathetic beyond expression, thus tragic and terrible, is life without immortality. The present can find adequate explanation nowhere but in an endless future, and reason is satisfied only as life awakes after the sleep of death in the light of the eternal morning and in the likeness of the Infinite Love.

CHAPTER II.

THE HEBREW PROPHETS AND IMMORTALITY.

"For thou art our father, though Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us." — ISAIAH lxiii. 16.

"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?" — MALACHI ii. 10.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." — ISAIAH lvii. 15.

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." — PSALM xc. 1.

"I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." — PSALM xvii. 15.

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterwards receive me to glory." — PSALM lxxiii. 24.

CHAPTER II.

THE HEBREW PROPHETS AND IMMORTALITY: THE CONDITIONS THAT MAKE FAITH POSSIBLE AND PRECIOUS.

THE Prophets of Israel are the great interpreters of the life of the people, the thinkers who bring to light the moral constitution of man, the moral organization of society, the moral order of the world, and the moral government of God. The great lesson on God and duty that Moses had gathered for Israel out of the momentous crisis of the Exodus, and had written on the tables of stone as the permanent source of a pure faith and an ideal life, the prophets reaffirmed out of a wider and richer experience, and carried into a moral philosophy of the world. As Moses, to whom ideas of immortality were familiar in their fantastic and repulsive Egyptian dress, said nothing about the future life, devoting his strength to the purification of the ideas of God and conduct, considering it his vocation to make a contribution to the moralism of his people, so the prophets when they came took up the programme of the illustrious emancipator, carried his belief in the living God into greater wealth of

conception and depth of assurance, and extended his brief germinal ideas on conduct into an analysis, in terms of a sublime morality, of the life of the nation and mankind. The prophets may, therefore, be styled the men who uncover the conditions that make faith in existence after death not only possible but precious.

An unmoral existence cannot be of abiding significance. The insuperable objection against the immortality of the lower animals is that their life is unmoral. Moral distinctions do not apply to their acts; they are not members of a moral and spiritual community. The great distinctions among them are the strong and the weak; and their supreme concern is with success and failure. It is because of this exclusion of ethical values from the aims and pursuits of the lower animals that there would seem to be no transcendent significance to their existence. Their life does not appear to be bound up with that of the Highest; nor can we deem them essential to the Wisdom and Beauty and Love that rule the universe. And so long as man can be described as merely one of the lower animals, attracted by the same ends and no other, and moved by impulses identical with those that impel them; so long as he acts from the purely animal principle of egoism, having for the chief distinctions of the society to which he belongs rich and poor, strong and weak, belief in the immortality of the soul is groundless and

worthless. We can imagine kinship between the flower and the star because both are beautiful, or between the acorn and the oak because there lies in the acorn the capacity for a magnificent life; but between the existence that is necessarily self-seeking and the Eternal Love there can be no fellowship. Sensuous existence is, therefore, necessarily perishable. In a most unbiblical sense it takes no thought for the morrow; it has no large discourse, looks neither before nor after, recognizes no order in the world, and possesses no interests beyond the fleeting moment. The aim, the interest, and the endeavor of the universal life are nothing to it; why then should its permanence be essential? Make man unmoral, and you make immortality neither possible nor desirable.

It is because the prophets stand for moralism of the profoundest and most august order that they lay foundations so broad and strong for faith in the permanence of the human soul. They involve so completely human existence and interest with the Divine existence and interest that the idea of the essentialness of humanity to God becomes almost inevitable. God is sublimely implicated in the history, experience, and destiny of Israel, and ultimately in the life of the race; hence that life must go on while God goes on. This is the aspect under which the Hebrew prophets view the life of their people, and, to some extent,

the life of the world. God is so vitally implicated in the history of a particular nation that the implication tends to become human and universal, and carries with it the assurance of the Divine concern for men, not only in time, but also beyond it. Human existence takes on, in the estimation of these seers, a character so vast and grand that it instantly becomes a sublime prophecy on its own account. This is the unequaled merit of Hebrew delineation in its highest forms. It finds the reality of life, discovers the character of human existence, and makes that speak for itself. As it was with the multitudes before whom Jesus stood, when Pilate said, Behold the man! so it is with sympathetic students when the Hebrew prophet says, Behold human life! It may be outraged by condition, disfigured by evil treatment, covered with the emblems of mockery, and crowned with shame, yet is there something divine and awe-inspiring in it, and its silence and patience become a mute but mighty prophecy of a hereafter of honor and power.

There is indeed a large distinction between prophet and psalmist. The office of the prophet is ethical and political; that of the psalmist is religious and spiritual. The writings of the Prophets are manuals for statesmen; the Psalms a confessional for the world. The literary production of the Prophets is related to the Psalms as oratory to lyric poetry. Nevertheless, prophecies

and psalms are parts of one great literature and, taken together, constitute the highest expression of the Hebrew mind, and both must therefore be considered in a discussion like the present. It is the total preparation effected by Hebrew genius for the distinct faith in the future life, with which we are here concerned. And amid many differences, prophets and psalmists are in profound agreement in matters of fundamental moment. Both are idealists: they behold the divine intention in human life; they see the glorious standard immanent in the conscience; they have a clear and certain vision of what men may be and should be. They are realists, having an eye for the sombre and terrible fact, being in habitual and infallible observation of the things men are doing, and the life they are living. They are transcendentalists; they rise above the earthly outlook, and with the divine vision behold the world.[1] This third characteristic, this transcendence of the merely human, and reach into the Divine, is the everlasting distinction of the Hebrew seer. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."[2] The

[1] George Adam Smith, *Isaiah*, vol. i. pp. 25–30, and Ewald, *Prophets of the Old Testament*, vol. i. pp. 25, 26.

[2] Isaiah lv. 8, 9.

CHAPTER II.

THE HEBREW PROPHETS AND IMMORTALITY.

tivated, and who had evidently a special call to mount up with wings as eagles, to transcend the earthly vision of things, and bring to the nation God's interpretation of its life.

This background of prophecy is in itself a vast premise of immortal life. Already we feel the momentousness of man's being, and perceive that it is something great with which we have to deal. Even before we come to the special ideas worked out by the prophets, the clear apprehension of their fundamental idea — that God's thoughts make, rule, and judge the world and that man may abandon his own and rest in the thoughts of God — prepared the mind for conclusions favorable to everlasting life.

The three great ideas worked out by the Hebrew prophets are the righteous character and government of God; the maladjustment in this world of character and circumstances; and the idea of vicarious suffering. Let us consider these ideas in this order.

1. With the idea of the righteous character and moral government of God, the soul of the prophet was possessed. It was the fire in his bones, the ground of his confidence, the spring of his passionate zeal. It filled his life with awe, and gave him his transcendent joy. Isaiah's vision is an example of the prophetic possession, for such it was. "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the

temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"[1] In this vision God is the Beautiful and the Awful. He is infinitely above the world, yet intimately concerned with it, ready to become its redeemer, inevitably its judge. The idea of the immanence of God, upon which so great and so just an emphasis is put in our time, the idea of the presence of God in the structure of human life, in its purpose, plan, and ideal, in its order, and in all its higher impulses, the very life of its life,—this great idea was far from unfamiliar to the prophets. But along with it went another, of which we must never lose sight, the idea of the Divine transcendence. The order, the plan, the structure of human life, and the breath of the Spirit of God, that evermore sweeps through it, bring God and man infinitely near; but the wrong, the outrage, the terrible wickedness of men separate the Divine and human by infinite distances. This is the idea of God mighty and merciful, that took sovereign possession of the prophetic soul. We know how ideas dominate men and give color to everything that they see. It is said of an eminent philosopher of our time that he is possessed with the idea of evolution.

[1] Isaiah vi. 1–3.

In the light of that supreme idea he sees and construes the world. If he looks into the sky, he at once sees the procession of heavenly bodies out of the primitive fiery mist, sees them taking on higher form and character as they advance, and at length beholds them with all their long history behind them resting in their present splendor and power. If he looks into the earth, it is to discover the successive stages of its growth as a planet, to find in it a fresh illustration of the idea of evolution. If he turns to human history, or to human language, institutions, customs, codes of law, systems of ethics, ritual and religion, it is to gather further verification of his great principle. This incapacity in Mr. Spenser to see anything in all the universe lying outside his supreme idea has in it something almost sublime. The intellect of the man is in complete subjection to this one ruling thought. It is a modern example of the absolute sway which a great idea may obtain over life. The Hebrew prophet is this sort of man; his incapacity for atheism is absolute. Like Malebranche he must behold all things in God; like Berkeley the vision of the world is the vision of God;[1] like Spinoza he is a God-intoxicated man. God is the first and supreme certainty of his soul, and wherever he looks he finds nothing but overwhelming evidence of God's presence and character.

[1] Isaiah vi. 3, "The fulness of the whole earth is his glory." See Driver's *Sermons on the Old Testament*, p. 28.

"Where'er I look is fire, where'er I listen
Music, and where I tend bliss evermore."

It is in the light of this sovereign idea of the righteous Jehovah that the prophet conducts his analysis of human life.

The national relation was the first to undergo complete moral interpretation.[1] The movement in Hebrew history, in common with all other history, was from the public to the particular, from the social to the personal, and from the outward to the inward aspects of life. In the message of Moses God was the nation's God, a being supremely concerned with the behavior of Israel as a body. It was the magnificent conception of the great leader, of the complete ownership of Israel by Jehovah, and of Jehovah's constant and jealous interest in Israel's fidelity that set the people in the heart of a developing moral consciousness. To be sure, back of this incipient nationalism lay the splendid individualism of the first Hebrew, who went out not knowing whither he went, and whose personal initiative became the creative impulse of a new community, a new history, a divine civilization. There also lay back of the mission of Moses the discipline of Israel's sore servitude. There is no school like that of suffering. Then the true

[1] "In some departments of life, especially in social and political ideals, the prophets reach a level which even Christian nations have not yet attained." R. F. Horton, *Revelation and the Bible*, p. 178.

relations between man and man and between man and God become clear and certain. The oppression through which Israel passed in Egypt gave them a sense of right and wrong of great depth and force, a perception of an order of life for human beings that, dim as it was, was yet of inexpressible value, and a consciousness of the universal righteousness and mercy that never afterwards left them, that ever increased in scope and power. An example of this is supplied from our own history. We sometimes speak of the negro as wanting in moral sense. When we so speak, we are comparing him with the Anglo-Saxon race, a race whose discipline has been so much longer and higher. The true comparison is between the negro and the African on his native soil. Which is the higher, the black man who passed through the bondage in America, or the black man who remained at home? There can be but one answer. The African in America won from his oppression a consciousness of right and wrong, a sense of need and a sense of God that we look for in vain in the African elsewhere. With all its horrors, African slavery was a discipline in righteousness. This does not warrant it, nor justify any of its evil results; it simply recognizes its amenableness to the divine purpose in human history, and its issues upon the black man's character. A similar amenableness and issue are evident in Israel's Egyptian servitude.

Still, it is in a large sense true that Israel's moral life began with the common consecration under Moses to Jehovah. All through the dark pictures of the conquest, and the loose life under the judges, "when every man did that which seemed good in his own eyes," the consciousness is never lost of a common and momentous relation to the righteous Lord. The sense of national responsibility to the righteous Jehovah is characteristic of the great kings. Saul is not without it; David's long reign, that so compacted the people and spread through the tribes the sense of union, is filled with it; and the morning splendor of Solomon's rule is owing to its influence. When at length the prophets came, they came as statesmen, with a message concerning the common relation to Jehovah, and declaring the moral ideal in terms of national obligation and privilege. Elijah is first of all a preacher of national righteousness, a sublime antagonist of atheistic kings and corrupt politicians that figure under the name of prophets of Baal. Elijah's heroic contention is the contention of all the prophets. Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah are supremely concerned with the state, the relation of the community to God the judge of all.

We find historic parallels in the large and well-nigh exclusive place that the state held in the Greek consciousness, in the Roman idea of patriotism as the supreme virtue, in the fact that many

of the strongest servants of the public, such as Pericles in Athens, Cæsar in Rome, Napoleon in France, Fox in England, and Hamilton and Webster in the United States, have been gravely deficient in their sense of private morality. A further illustration of the Hebrew method of finding, in the first instance, the moral meaning of life in the common relation to God as king, is found in the primacy of patriotic duty over all other obligations in times of national crisis. When Fort Sumter was fired upon and the flag was dishonored in the streets of Baltimore in 1861, the obligation to education was cast aside by the finest youth in our colleges, and business engagements and domestic duties had to give place to the sovereign claims of the nation. The whole morality of the country became for the moment a political morality, and all the worth of life was summed up in the one supreme excellence of patriotism. What marks modern life only in hours of national crisis was characteristic of the Hebrew mode of thought. The mass of the people, the social whole, the national total gave the first assurance of the moral value of human existence.

The opening chapters of Isaiah supply vivid illustrations of this national moralism. "Woe to them that join house to house, and field to field."[1] Isaiah has his land question. He does not say how the land should be owned; but he

[1] Isaiah v. 8.

does say, what every competent political economist of our time says, that the land is for the public good. It may be owned by few, by many or by all; but it must be used for all. The use of the earth is thus, with the prophet, a momentous moral question.

With the same prophet the liquor question is a burning one. "Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night that wine may inflame them."[1] The woe is a social woe. Such disaster drink has wrought, that Hades, a monster in capacity and greed as she is, has had to enlarge her appetite and open her mouth without measure. Down into the immeasurable mouth of the monster Hades, drink is sending the glory and the multitude and the pomp of the nation. We think Shakespeare's words strong: "O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains;" but these words are tame compared to Isaiah's of Hell glutted with the overwhelming supply from the waste wrought by drink.

Speech is a moral affair. "Woe to them that call evil good and good evil."[2] There is, according to this prophet, an immutable morality. There are in life fixed and eternal distinctions between right and wrong, good and evil, discovered and set in certain light through social and

[1] Isaiah v. 11. [2] Isaiah v. 20.

national experience. These distinctions have drawn to themselves fixed names. Woe to the men that confuse the things that are eternally distinct. Currency is the medium of honest business, and all honest men dread, as an appalling evil, the confusion of the currency. Speech is the currency of morality, and woe to the men that tamper with it and put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. The moral view of the nation is further seen in its relation to God. Its wrong-doing is against him, and its suffering from whatever secondary cause is his punishment. The invasion of the Scythian and Assyrian, the scourge of the Babylonian, and the suffering of the exile are punishments for moral wrongs committed against Jehovah. The prophets had not only a moral philosophy of Israel's history, but they approached a moral philosophy of all history. Amos believed that the same Divine Being that brought Israel out of Egypt brought also the Philistines from Caphtor and the Aramæans from Kir.[1] Standing upon his prophetic watch-tower, the sheperd of Tekoa surveyed the Palestinian states, Damascus, Philistia, Phœnicia, Edom, Moab, Judah, and Israel, finding them within the same moral circle as they were included within the same physical limits, and, discovering the prevalence of moral wrongs in all alike, predicted for them a common doom under

[1] Amos ix. 7.

the righteous rule of Jehovah. And the instrument of this retribution is the great Assyrian power already looming on the horizon. Thus impartial is Amos in his scorn of moral evil, in his grouping of degenerate states, and in his application of the principles of universal morality. Thus broad is his sense of the movement of God in human history. Indeed, as Professor W. Robertson Smith has said, "every movement of history is Jehovah's .work." [1] The prophets believed that the nations, in their campaigns against one another, in their victories and defeats, were the unconscious instruments of the righteous ruler of the world. For all mankind, this alternation of defeat and victory, of disaster and prosperity, this seemingly endless and tragic succession of oppressed and oppressor, was a divinely ordained discipline in righteousness. The movements of history through war and famine and pestilence, through social disorganization and national ruin, are, in the judgment of the prophet, parts of one sublime plan for the moral culture of mankind.

Carlyle said that the study of the French Revolution saved him from atheism, gave him an unhesitating and certain faith in the righteous character of God and his government of the world. He saw in that conflagration of crime, the retribution upon ages of misrule and outrage, the assertion through the most appalling of modern

[1] *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 133.

historical tragedies of the Divine justice, the disclosure, as through yawning abysses, of the immutable moral order of the world. The French Revolution was the vast fire kindled by the godlessness and inhumanity of the eighteenth century, and in which it burnt itself out. It is a flaming world-example of the inevitable end of all lying and lust, all godlessness and cruelty among men. It remains a supreme and awful vindication of the integrity of God and his righteous government of the earth.

What Carlyle saw in the French Revolution, Emerson saw in the American civil war. It did not dismay him, but set his inmost heart on fire. It was a fresh and sovereign proof that under the constitution of the United States, and its permission of slavery, lay the constitution of the universe and its prohibition of slavery. The civil war was, to the American seer, an instance of collision between the order of God and the inventions of men, between the moral idea of the nation and the commercial, between an ethical view of human life and an animal. The bloodshed and the suffering are but the speaking color and character of the mighty picture. Here, in our own land, there has been a revelation of the eternal truth, a retribution upon national wrong-doing, a vast and sorrowful discipline in righteousness. If one wants to study that deepest and most momentous of all human inquiries, the moral government

of God, let him go, not to the treatises of profound thinkers as his first discipline, but to the great crises in human history. Let him study, under the Hebrew prophets, the Scythian, Assyrian and Babylonian invasions of Israel and Judah; and, under Gibbon, the dissolution of the Roman empire. Let him ask why that empire was unable to master the modern world as it had mastered the ancient, and for what reason it was unequal to the opportunity of receiving, ruling and assimilating the barbarian hordes that swarmed upon its borders. Let him study the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution, or better still, the history of the American civil war. These are the mighty textbooks in which the moral government of God is outlined. In our own history we have one textbook of world-wide significance; nor have we begun to fathom this revelation of God to the nation and the world. The civil war is a national discipline, of the most momentous character, in the moral philosophy of life, and strikingly illustrates the national moralism of the Hebrew prophets, gathered, as it was, out of the historical crises of their people.

The ethical meaning of the family is another step in the prophetic analysis of human life. The family becomes a revelation of the Divine: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."[1] "Have we not all one

[1] Psalm ciii. 13.

father?"[1] is the great question of Malachi. "Doubtless thou art our father"[2] is the sublime assertion of another prophet. The point here is, that there must have been a very high ideal of human fatherhood, a profoundly moral view taken of its purpose, and an interpretation of its spirit very beautiful and grand, before it could have been employed, by a Hebrew prophet, to represent God's highest interest in man. The presence of such phrases in the prophetic writings is a tribute to the family relation, a witness to the honor in which it was held, and a proof that its moral structure and meaning were clearly seen. Isaiah begins his prophecy with the significant words: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."[3] Words like these do not leave in doubt the prophet's idea of the home. The father has done his full duty. His fatherly love has, for its return, not that which is its everlasting due, gratitude, obedience, and filial trust, but rebellion. This is the worst that can be said against children, they are in the filial relation without the filial spirit. That exemplifies the unnatural and immoral life. The home in anarchy is the strongest image of the

[1] Malachi ii. 10. [2] Isaiah lxiii. 16. [3] Isaiah i. 2–3.

anarchy of men against the authority of God. Home in the realization of its true purpose, in the rich and sweet and harmonious life that comes from the reverent recognition and faithful discharge of mutual obligations, is a type of the best thing in the universe, the ideal relation of God and men. To such thinkers there can be no doubt of the ethical meaning of the family.

But the most powerful of all the prophetic interpretations of domestic life, the deepest revelation of its moral order, the most passionate and touching display of its sanctity and beauty, are found in the prophecy of Hosea. That wonderful, burning book is as profound and noble an interpretation of family life as man ever made. Love is recognized as the only and the everlasting foundation of it, a love pure, punitive, redeeming, immortal. It is a real book, brief, but great. A terrible sorrow underlies it, a heart-rending grief. There is conviction in its every word, passionate feeling, assuming by turns the form of fear, disgust, pity, indignation; but always returning to its original form of love. The whole book throbs with life. Written twenty-six centuries ago, it seems even now as if the prophet's soul were running through it, a stream of fire. So corrupt is the society of his time that the wife of his love becomes unfaithful; and never was the horror of domestic infidelity painted with greater power. The feeling that can survive even that

horror was never so set forth. The love that is the only legitimate inspiration of wedlock is insulted and outraged; yet it does not die. It looks upon its children with an unspeakable sorrow. It knows not, in the infamy of its home, if they are its own; it names them in token of its disgrace and grief. It suffers as pure love alone can suffer. Still it cannot abandon the unfaithful one; it cannot surrender the children of doubt and shame; it becomes a retributive love. The erring one is laid under the moral scourge. This retributive and terrible love is at length triumphant; the sins of the home are washed out in its tears; the children of suspicion are born again and taken to a father's heart, and their names are changed. The eldest born, Jezreel, shall no more mean the valley of shame, but the victory of love; the name of the second, Lo-ruhamah, the uncompassionated, shall give place to Ruhamah, the compassionated, and the name of the third, Lo-ammi, not mine, shall be exchanged for Ammi, my very own. As I have said, I do not know where to look for an interpretation of the home of equal moral depth. The prophet takes his own experience as husband and father, an experience of insult, outrage, and unutterable sorrow, one in which love has recovered the faithless, reclaimed and purified the children, rebuilt and transfigured the ruined home and set it once more upon immutable foundations; he takes this section of his personal

history and reads through it the relation of Jehovah to Israel. I must not stop to trace the analogue. I simply call attention again to the revelation of the ethical structure, the moral and immortal meaning of family life set forth by this inspired man. To the superficial, his book is repulsive, but to those who count family life dear and great, and subject to terrible menace, who would evermore found it upon a love that many waters cannot quench nor floods drown, the utter plainness of the prophet's speech will be the only permissible speech, when utterance on such things becomes a necessity. When homes are most corrupt a noble mind will gain a vision as by contrast of God's order; a vision intense and certain, that the wickedness of men cannot destroy or even obscure the work of God. The stability of this planet is never more evident than when the wild storms that beat upon it for whole seasons cannot move it an inch from its true path. It was in times of widespread corruption that the prophets appeared. In the heart of the disorder and fighting it, they beheld God's plan, and the licentiousness of an age only set in intenser light the purity in which God had created mankind. Human savagery stood opposed to the humanity of God, and in their vision man's wrong-doing was set in awful contrast to God's integrity. It is night that gives us the widest outlook upon the stellar universe, and human perversity thus

served the prophets. Revelation came to them through contrasts; God's order stood forth unmistakable and sublime against man's black confusions. Their ideas of God and his world were not fine theories, spun in speculative leisure, colliding with the actual, and ultimately going to pieces in the day of judgment that awaits all *a priori* theory. They came from a vision that reached the heart of things; they were the mental image of the eternal fact. These men saw the power of evil; they saw, too, the power of God. They knew that the whirlwind would carry away everything loose and unessential; they knew, also, that it could not carry away the face of the earth. Everywhere these men beheld the eternal through the temporal, and corrupt homes did not make them conclude that the groundwork of the family is animal feeling. Evil homes gave them a more luminous and burning sense of the true foundation of the household, utter and deathless love.

The third step in the moral analysis of life is indicated by the conception at which the prophets arrived concerning the conscience.[1] Conscience

[1] Isaiah i. 18; Amos iii. 7; Isaiah xvii. 7; Jeremiah xxxi. 23–34. "In two ways Jeremiah constitutes himself an advocate of the claims of the individual: by contradicting the old adage about the fathers eating sour grapes and the children's teeth being set on edge, and by claiming for the individual, however insignificant, an immediate knowledge of God. In the one case he asserts personal responsibility against the law of heredity, and in the other he vindicates the independence of the individual in his religious relations to God of all mediation by priestly representatives." — A. B. Bruce, *Apologetics*, p. 188.

is the organ of discourse with God, the power by which the soul enters into dialogue with its Maker: "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord." The moral reason of man is open to the Divine appeal. "Each can hear the other's call." As the peal of thunder is taken up and repeated by the mountain, so the word of God, uttered from above, is echoed in the soul. Between God and man there can be interchange of thought, and from God to man there can be transfer of judgment. The history of Elijah is an example. That unique and towering prophet is everywhere the speaker from God. He confronts Ahab after the murder of Naboth, and makes conscience as evident and awful in the breast of the guilty king as in his own. Elijah in all his public work is ever appealing to the personal conscience, and always entering the social order and sentiment through the personal. He is an ethical awakener and educator, a speaker from the moral personality of God to the moral personality of man. The motto for his mission is conscience, the conscience of God declaring itself through the conscience of the prophet to that of the king and people. The great drama of Macbeth does not present a moral sense more developed. In that drama there is a conscience of the world, corresponding to the Hebrew idea of the Divine conscience; there is the conscience of the guilty king and queen, and that of an outraged nation. This work of Shake-

speare is indeed a mighty expression of the moral law that rules the world, of the moral sense in man that reflects and cannot but revere that law, and of the moral and infinite values in human acts, in human life. The history of Elijah is a similar and even grander expression. Here, for moral law, we have the moral personality of God, and through the soul of the prophet we have the action of God upon the ethical nature of king and nation. The significance of the personal life to which God thus speaks, no man can measure. That scene in Horeb in which God is discovered to Elijah is of fundamental moment, as an interpretation of the moral personality.[1] Elijah found God, not in the wind and earthquake and fire, but in the still, small voice. The outward world cannot give us God; it is in the calm depths of conscience that the image of his character is found; in that sphere of silence and mystery the Divine voice is heard. Take up the parable. Turn wind, earthquake and fire into the ordered and infinite universe; open intelligence to the endless march of wonders. They tell of power, but not of goodness; of life, infinite life, but not of moral order, love and mercy. The heavens, indeed, declare the glory, the strength of God; but the higher revelation must come from the law, the recorded utterance of God to the Hebrew leaders, the express speech of God to the conscience of the makers of

[1] 1 Kings xix. 10–13.

Israel. The prophetic vocation itself, as the lifting of the individual spirit to God, is a witness to the worth of man; and so serious and great is the emphasis thus placed upon the moral personality of man as related to the moral personality of God, that it is hardly an extension of the prophet's thought to say that to him personal life has a meaning solemn and infinite. At the same time, individualism, previous to Jeremiah, is a certain implication of prophetic thought rather than a conscious conviction. Yet in the doctrine of conscience, and in the prophetic vocation itself, individualism is certainly foreshadowed; and as early as Jeremiah the latent thought finds strenuous advocacy.[1]

There is also among the prophets the idea of the educational value of temptation. When Moses receives his commission from the voice in the burning bush, it seems a burden unbearable. Who am I that I should stand before Pharaoh? When questioned by my brethren, who sent me, what shall I say? Behold, they will not believe me, nor listen to my voice. O Lord, I am not eloquent! These questions and outcries indicate a powerful temptation, a temptation to evade duty; and the struggle is prolonged and terrible. The whole soul of the Midian shepherd is convulsed; and driven from one excuse he retreats to another,

[1] Jeremiah xxxi. 23–34. Ezekiel xviii. and Micah vi. 2, for earlier implied individualism and immortality.

until left without shelter and looking into the flaming eyes of undeniable and divine obligation. He is the subject of such experiences, and passes through them into nobler character and vaster power.[1] Through this temptation he reaches his everlasting no, and his everlasting yea, and thus becomes the type of his people. The educational value of temptation, and its attestation to the dignity of the individual, applies to every Hebrew to whom he is sent.[2] The experience of Moses holds true also of all the prophets. They were sorely tried men, fighting with beasts as Paul did at Ephesus, preaching a righteousness that was often unpopular, and that left them for the most part in a hopeless minority. Jeremiah[3] describes how he shrank from his mission, feeling himself like a child called upon to do a giant's work. His whole being seemed to revolt from it, and again the struggle was a convulsion. It ploughed with distress his sensitive and beautiful nature, but he became master of his soul, and gave to God's word its rightful ascendency. His sense of duty remained unviolated, his commission was accepted, and through his trial Jeremiah came into his

[1] Exodus v. 20–23; xiv. 15; xxxii. 9–14; Numbers xx. 11.

[2] Deuteronomy viii.; Psalm xcv. If this is ideal history, the meaning read out of the events long afterwards, it is still true history.

[3] Individualism is a marked feature in the career and thought of Jeremiah. See George Adam Smith, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. ii. p. 41.

spiritual possessions. After reading the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, no one can doubt that according to Hebrew conceptions every man was fitted to learn through suffering, to gather a wider and more luminous sense of the divine through trial, and to come forth into a richer and mightier consciousness because of moral struggle. The conscience an echo of God's voice in the soul, the conscience the supreme revelation of God, the tried conscience the pathway to certainty and power; these surely are lofty views of personal life.

Thus we have come through national moralism, and the sanctity and supreme significance of the family, to a conception of the moral worth and sacredness of the individual life. As one standing among Scotch hills in the early autumn, at sundown, and when the heather is in full bloom, perceives first the glory of the whole as it fashions itself into one seamless and superb robe, flung like royal purple round the shoulders of the kingly elevation, then observes the rich clusters and groups of beauty in the separate bushes, and last of all notices the single flower, the individual blossom, and its delicate and exquisite tint and tone, so these Hebrew prophets regarded life. The general outline was the first to impress them, the gathered greatness and collective dignity of men, the multitudes of the people as they melted into one mass of royal possibility, with the beauty of the Lord their God resting upon them; then came

the recognition of the smaller groups and wholes; the sense of the loveliness and the lofty import of home; and finally the prophet's eyes fell upon the individual heart and discerned its wonderful structure, its sacred office, its priceless worth. The moral government of God, first discovered as concerned with the nation, is next beheld as extending to the family, and lastly is seen searching the heart of the individual human being, and clothing his life with a dignity altogether unspeakable. We are prepared for a universal morality in the thought of the prophet who thus condenses his appeal to his people: "Seek him that maketh the Pleiades and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; the Lord is his name!"[1] Not a ritualistic, but an ethical devotion is the way of salvation. Nor can we doubt that all life is viewed under moral relations by the seer, who declares: "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; and though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent and he shall bite them."[2] Have we not here the model

[1] Amos v. 8. [2] Amos ix. 2–4.

according to which is shaped the sublime individualism of the one hundred and thirty-ninth psalm?

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me,
And the light about me shall be night;
Even the darkness hideth not from thee,
But the night shineth as the day:
The darkness and the light are both alike to thee.
. . . . . .
Search me, O God, and know my heart:
Try me and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any way of wickedness in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting."[1]

2. The second great idea wrought out by the

[1] Ps. cxxxix. 7–12, 23–24. Upon this passage the best modern commentary is the famous peroration of Daniel Webster in the White murder case. "A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent, like the Deity. If we take ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed or duty violated is still with us, for our happiness or our misery. If we say the darkness shall cover us, in the darkness as in the light our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power nor fly from their presence. They are with us in this life, will be with us at its close; and in that scene of inconceivable solemnity, which lies yet farther onward we shall still find ourselves surrounded with the consciousness of duty, to pain us wherever it has been violated, and to console us in so far as God may have given us grace to perform it."— Vol. vi. p. 105. For the best ancient commentary, see Xenophon's *Anabasis*, Book II. chap. 5, sec. 7.

Hebrew prophets is the maladjustment of character and circumstances in this world. So far, the work of the prophets has been wholly positive. If they had at any time doubts as to the righteous character and government of God, they were not strong enough to influence the type of their thinking. We have seen life analyzed in terms of moral law, bound with the bands of accountability to God, linked in its purpose with the righteous will of Jehovah.

The next advance is made through the most terrible form of doubt. Here, of course, I use the word "prophet" in its wider significance, as including all the higher minds in Israel. The Hebrew believed in the goodness of God. He looked upon the world as it is, and God and his world seemed to be in utter contradiction. This contradiction lay upon his heart at first a great and unexplained burden. The elements of the problem were in his feelings; they were not yet clearly reflected in his intelligence. He went on in the assertion of the goodness of God and in the moral accountability of life, and yet oppressed by the sight of his eyes. There came a time when the two parts of the problem stood out in absolute clearness. God is good; the world is bad; but if the world is bad, how can the maker of it be good? The form that the question took was this, Bad men prosper, while the good suffer.[1] Character and circum-

[1] See Psalms xvii., xxxvii., xlix., lxxiii.

stances are not fitted to each other. If God is really on the side of goodness we should expect that while bad men suffer, good men should prosper; but the facts are often the other way. Thus from the depths of life the awful question is forced up, How can I keep my faith in the goodness of God and still believe that this world is his world?

To the student of human thought, such an hour in Hebrew history is full of meaning. The night is darkest just before dawn; man's extremity is God's opportunity; when the tale of bricks is doubled, Moses comes. The world has already rolled forward when it has become able to put into words its great question. Descartes is the classic modern example. His quest is for certainty, and he cannot put up with guesses; he must know the truth and find a fixed home for thought; but how can this be attained? He will doubt everything that can be doubted, in the hope that he may get down at last to the certain. He finds it easy to doubt the positions of the ancient philosophers, the theories of the schoolmen, the dogmas that are current in his own day. At last he comes upon something certain: he cannot doubt that he is doubting; and since to doubt is to think, he cannot doubt that he is thinking; and since to think is to be, he cannot doubt his own existence as a personal intelligence. Thus the philosopher's thirst for certainty and his radical and terrible doubt bring his feet at last to the

immutable rock. The Hebrew doubt of God's goodness, raised by the maladjustment of character and circumstances, is the sign of progress. This sign of sure advance is more marked in the psalms noted above and in the book of Job; but it is by no means wanting in the prophets. The plaintive words of Isaiah belong here: "And I will wait for the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him." [1] In Jeremiah the question has become a more anxious one: "Wherefore doth the wicked prosper?" [2] In another prophet the question has assumed the most painful vigor: "Thou that art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and that canst not look on perverseness, wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth by the man that is more righteous than he; and makest men as fishes in the sea, as the creeping things that have no ruler over them." [3]

In the psalms this problem becomes so pressing that a solution must be found. Two answers to the terrible question may be cited as representative. The first trusts to the rectifying power of time, in this world.[4] Wait on Jehovah, take into view the whole of life; bad men prosper only for the day; good men suffer but for a little while. Wait and see all; even in this world you shall

[1] Isaiah viii. 17.
[2] Jeremiah xii. 1–3.
[3] Habakkuk i. 13, 14.
[4] Psalm xxxvii. 34–40.

find the character of good and bad men matched with appropriate circumstances.

> "Our times are in his hand
> Who saith, a whole I planned.
> Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid."

This is the first answer, and it is one supported by many facts; but it certainly does not cover all the facts. What shall we say of the men of whom the world was not worthy, who were stoned or sawn asunder, or slain with the sword; the men who went about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, evil-entreated, wandering in deserts and caves and the holes of the earth? Compare the sufferings of such men with the comfort of corrupt politicians, wealthy liquor-dealers, time-serving ministers, and the Shylocks of trade. The adjustment of character and circumstances in this world is never complete. Socrates is the best man in Athens, and he is made to drink the hemlock. Huss is the bravest man in the Europe of his time, and he is burned at the stake. Paul is the most splendid character of his age, and he is beheaded. Jesus Christ is the sovereign spirit in history, and he is crucified between two thieves. Nor can Americans forget that Abraham Lincoln the patriot is assassinated, while Jefferson Davis the traitor lives on. These are the terrible facts that must be reconciled with the goodness of God. The author of the seventy-third psalm goes bravely to the task, supplying a better answer

than that given above. He takes the whole distressing fact of the prosperity of the bad and the suffering of the good into the sanctuary, into the highest mood of the human spirit, and there he sees that wickedness does draw after it a real and awful evil. He sees too that his doubt has originated largely in an unmoral mood, the mood that looks for outward good as the wages and motive of true character; he sees into the intrinsic, immeasurable, and immortal joy of goodness. Goodness does not need loaves and fishes to eke out its pay; its zest is in itself; its treasure is in its own heart. The good man is satisfied from himself; and his cry is, I shall be satisfied, not when my lofty longings are matched with outward prosperity, but when I awake in the Divine likeness.[1] He finds the eternal sweetness of gratitude and trust in Jehovah, and his faith breaks forth in the exultant strain, —

"Whom have I in heaven but thee?
And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.
My flesh and my heart faileth:
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."[2]

We have here an immense step forward. The question of work and wages, the fact that prosperity is so often the wages of wickedness and suffering of uprightness, has led to a deeper view. Sooner or later, in earth or in Hades, the wages of sin is death, a reduction of being to ruin and

[1] Psalm xvii. 15. [2] Psalm lxxiii. 25–26.

wretchedness. The recompense of goodness is not money, is not comfort, is not always length of days. It can even dispense with all that. The recompense of righteousness is eternal life, conscious communion with the Infinite, interchange of sympathy and interest with God, the vision of his glory, the ever-deepening love of it, and the perpetual advance in its likeness. This is the life of absolute worth, that inherits the immortal years. The maladjustment of character and circumstances in this world incites to a profounder spiritual life; and out of this life comes the distinct faith in the endless future of the soul.

The book of Job deals with the same problem. The influence of this book in awakening mankind to the moral idea of life has been incalculable. The perplexity, the pathos, the contradictions and the sufferings there so powerfully uttered, are in themselves a witness to the moral structure of the world. To an unmoral being life can never become a moral problem. The greater, the intenser, and more awful the problem, the grander the attestation to the moral basis of existence. In Job, perplexity goes in the breadth and power of the tempest, the pathos is as if the heart of humanity had melted into tears, the contradictions appear in giant dimensions, and the suffering is the collected sufferings of the world. Thus the passion and the sorrow and the sublime movement of the poem are evidence of the infinite

meaning of life. There could not be so much ado about nothing. There could not be such wealth of emotion, such reach of thought, such vexation of reason, such noble and fathomless sorrow, unless the significance of life were great.

Then there is in Job the vindication of the utter purity of love. Doth Job serve God for nought? Satan does not believe that he can. His wealth, his power, his home, his health — for these Job is faithful. These are swept away and the ascription is made: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Work and wages are again before us, and Satan is right and wrong at the same time. Doth Job serve God for nought? No. But his recompense is not what Satan thinks it is; he still keeps the reward of his fidelity when all these outward things are taken away. Job becomes a perplexed and awful sufferer; but he works his way out into the perfect remunerations of obedience, the reciprocal joy between his heart and God's, the immortal comfort of love. Such a life cannot die.

Another wonderful educational effect of this book must be noticed. The good are prospered, the bad are punished by adversity; that was the current view. The inference was that unfortunate men were bad men, successful men good men; a half truth became the whole truth and has all the effect of a falsehood. That creed

Job utterly repudiates and despises, and in its face asserts his immovable conviction in his integrity. Whatever be the reason of his suffering, he contends that it is not his sin. In this magnificent claim for freedom of conscience we have the assertion of the worth of individual life; in this sublime contention that suffering is not always the proof of sin, we have a preparation for the idea of vicarious suffering, the suffering of the righteous servant of Jehovah, the suffering of the sinless Christ, the suffering that becomes the redemptive force of the world. Human life is here taking on immeasurable meaning, running itself down into the infinities beneath and lifting itself into the infinities above; it is ceaselessly growing, sweeping out beyond the old boundaries; from a lake it has become a sea; from an inland sea, an ocean, whose great tides are the consciousness of its everlastingness.

The prophet lays the deepest of all foundations for the immortal life, when in his hymn he sums up the whole higher thought of his people: —

> "For though the fig tree shall not blossom,
> Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
> The labor of the olive shall fail,
> And the fields shall yield no meat;
> The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
> And there shall be no herd in the stall:
> Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,
> I will joy in the God of my salvation." [1]

[1] Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.

3. For the expression of the third great idea wrought out by the Hebrew prophets, the idea of vicarious suffering, I must simply refer to the classic Old Testament utterance, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. There we read, in words of unequaled power and tenderness, of the sufferings of the righteous servant of God for his wicked people, words that foreshadow the suffering of the righteous One for mankind, that seem less like the description of the prophetic ideal, and more like a page from the biography of the suffering Christ. This chapter binds into one the nation and its purest man, yokes the destiny of the bad to that of the best, preaches the solidarity of Israel and by implication that of the world, and involves the Infinite in the catastrophes and the hopes of mankind. What does it mean, the idea of vicarious suffering, but that the strong must serve the weak, the best must seek the worst, the Divine must redeem the human, and God take to his heart forever the erring race of man? To this height of suffering love the prophet is led, and his words, in delineation of his ideal, foreshadow, as I have said, the advent of the perfect Life.

We are here in a position to return a final word to the question that has faced us again and again in this discussion. After all, had the prophets a gospel for the individual? The question might startle us more than it would them, while we con-

sider men as so many unrelated or loosely related units. While we fail to organize life into a vast fellowship, ignore the duty and the sympathy and the necessity that bind man to man, and altogether miss the mighty relational structure of human society, can we have a gospel for the individual? Is not man of consequence only as he is made a member of a home, a citizen of a state, and one of a kind? Is he not of importance only as he is seen to be an essential part of a whole whose life is bound up with the purpose and life of God? The nationalism of the Hebrew prophets, what may be termed their socialism, is in fact the only source and pledge of a gospel for the individual. Pure individualism makes a gospel for any one an impossibility. The metaphysics of individualism is materialism, its ethics egoism, its last word dispersion and death. These three ideas of the great Hebrew thinkers — the righteous character and government of God, the maladjustment of character and circumstances in this world, and the suffering of the just for the unjust — constitute a premise from which only one conclusion respecting the individual can be drawn. The premise is God and man essential each to the other, and the conclusion is immortal life. That conclusion, except in a few of the psalms and in the writings of the later prophets, is not distinctly and unmistakably drawn in Hebrew literature; but life being construed in terms of a sublime

morality, lifted into the concern of the Infinite, and put in association with the Divine conscience and pity, is left to speak for itself, and make upon the mind of the receptive student the impression of its consequence. There could not be a grander method, nor for the beginnings of religious thought, a more effectual. The man who is guiding us on our first journey through Alpine splendors had better be silent; the grandeur of the sea under the tempest needs no one to call attention to it; the person in charge of the glass through which we gaze upon the overwhelming wonders and glories of the stellar universe will do well to say nothing. The mountain, the sea, and the midnight sky speak for themselves and make their own impression. Behold them, and they will fashion the heart into a suitable mood; look upon human life through the vision of the Hebrew seer, and it will stamp its character in feeling, and form thought into positive and exultant faith.

In the remains of ancient art the torso occupies a large place; we have few complete figures. Many of our most precious treasures are but splendid fragments. Still they serve to indicate the artist's ideal, and sympathetic study is able to restore the impaired figure and rebuild the Parthenon. There is in the torso a logic of beauty, which if faithfully followed will lead to the perfect work. Most of the thinking of the world is

in the torso form; there is little that is systematic and complete. The remains of ancient thinking are in this state, and the thought of the Hebrew prophets is no exception to the rule. It is a torso, a brilliant fragment, a grand, but uncompleted scheme of the world. There is, however, in it a logic, noble and irresistible. Although the prophets do not proclaim the idea of the future life of the soul, we can see the coherence of that faith with the general view of the world entertained by them. Their work was not with immortality, but with the conditions that make immortality possible and precious. God, duty, and immortality are the three ideas that Kant sent into the modern world, and the three together constitute the completed creed of the Hebrew prophets. They busied themselves with God and duty; their thought is a torso; but working by the guidance of its noble logic we can complete the work, and to the sense of the Supreme Goodness and moral obligation add the power of an endless life.

CHAPTER III.

THE POETS AND IMMORTALITY

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not one existing and immutable; it is construed as nothing more than the brilliant play of mental powers; it is apprehended as indeed wonderful thinking, but arbitrary and wild, stimulating and overpowering as intellectual display, but capricious and worthless as a guide to truth.

These views are wholly mistaken, and bar the hearts of multitudes to the great message that poetry brings concerning God's world. Great poetry, it is true, deals with the ideal; but in thus refusing to linger in the actual, it reaches the real. Sense declares that the sun goes round the earth; the poetry of science first saw that the earth goes round the sun, and the prose of science came afterwards and proved it. The Police Gazette gives one side of human life, gives the vices and crimes that make it loathsome and terrible; it gives the actual, but it does not give the real, that for which the spirit of man was made. The missionary journal gives another side. It prophesies of penitence for wrong done, of evil habits broken up, of virtue replacing vice, sobriety drunkenness, thrift extravagance, industry idleness, tenderness brutality, and love selfishness. That is the ideal, and it is also the real, the thing to which savage men may come, toward which they are pushed by the higher forces of the world. Which gives the real in our national life, the pro-slavery clergyman, or the unorthodox abolitionist? The clergyman states what is, and con-

secrates that as the will of God for all time; the abolitionist cries out for what is not, and declares that the non-existent is the real, the eternal truth. History has sided with the abolitionist against the pro-slavery clergyman. The actual does not always give the ideal; but the ideal always gives the real, what God ordains, works for, and will surely make actual at last. The old Hebrew sent forth over the deluge the raven, and it did not return. That is the dead prose of life, the blind agnosticism that cannot see beyond the wild floods of the actual. The other and later messenger returns and brings in her mouth the olive branch; the actual was still abysmal, but there were hints of better things. That is the spirit of all great poetry; the actual may engage it, amaze it, for a time bewilder it, but cannot detain it. Over the abyss it passes, and finding no hint of God returns to the shelter of faith and there waits; forth it goes a second time, and with its keener vision discovers the promise of coming good, and returns again with the tokens of that perfect future. It hopes to go forth yet a third time to return no more, in the freedom of reason satisfied and in the full joy of an experience in which the ideal and the actual are in inseparable and perfect union.

Another objection to poetry, when converted into a teacher upon the profounder issues of life, is that it has its rise in feeling. This is indeed

true, but it is no more true of poetry than of all mental life whatsoever. The first thing in the mental life that looks outward is a feeling of sense, and sensuous feeling understood is perception; that is, knowledge of the outward world. The first thing in the mental life that looks inward is spiritual feeling, and spiritual feeling understood is philosophy and faith. In the order of time all mental life begins in feeling, but it does not really become mental life until understanding is added. The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob. Sensuous feeling is the beginning of the half-apprehension and of the misapprehension that followed. Men are fooled by their sensations as the Hebrew father was by his younger son; then renewed and repeated sensation comes in, like Esau, to reveal and partly correct the blunder. Thus what is true of poetry is true of all mental life; it has its origin in feeling. It may further be contended that feeling is ever greater than the intellect, sensational life than the understanding. Every child is infinitely rich in the elements of knowledge, since the order of the earth and sky is given in its sense-feeling; but because of the weakness of the construing intellect, the order is unknown. The average man is overpowered with the affluence of sense-feelings. Wonder and admiration in the presence of the sublime in nature, as the Alpine mountain or the starry sky, mean that the

mind is overwhelmed with the wealth of sense-emotion. While the average man does not know what to do with this wealth, the great man does. He interprets sense, orders and understands the materials given through eyes and ears, puts upon this mass a name and character, and lifts it into the ever-expanding and ever-brightening world of science. However, even in the consummate scientific genius, sense-feeling is ever greater than intellect. If all the impressions that God's order makes upon men of supreme scientific genius were understood, science would at once take on vaster and fairer proportions. And in the same way moral and spiritual feeling is larger than reason. There is an ethical order and a spiritual; these worlds are invisible, but they impinge upon the inward sensibility, they impress feeling, they stamp their character upon the heart. There lies in the spiritual feeling of the commonest man more than the deepest philosopher has yet explored; whole worlds of possible intellectual wealth lie there awaiting the efficient mind. Spiritual feeling is not knowledge, but it is the condition and material of knowledge; it has in it the registered impact and image of the moral and invisible order, and if the feeling could be fathomed and understood, the science of divine things would be immeasurably advanced.

Now as the scientist works in the interpretation of sense-feeling, and builds out of the untold

wealth there the amazing universe of modern thought, so the poet and philosopher work upon the inward feeling, and out of the infinite riches there construct the sublime worlds of philosophy and faith. The philosopher works by one method, the poet by another; still the common consciousness is the fountain at which both draw the water of life. Philosophy is not content to understand feeling; it goes on to test its understandings, and this is its peculiar character. Philosophy seeks to verify, vindicate, prove its ideas; poetry, on the other hand, moves in a magnificent trust, and leaves its ideas to make way for themselves. The distinguishing feature of all great poetry is its high faith in its own intellectual findings; it wins its verdict, not by ordered argument, but by the self-evidence of its ideas. In detail, in order, in intellectual thoroughness it is immeasurably behind philosophy, but in clear and comprehensive vision it is infinitely in advance of philosophy. Shakespeare is England's greatest poet, and Bishop Butler is her greatest ethical philosopher. In order, and thoroughness, and assurance of ideas the philosopher is the greater; while in richness and range of vision the poet is the incomparable leader. Now and then, in the course of centuries, logical power and insight blend, as in Plato, in equal degrees, the understanding and the imagination, the philosopher and the poet.

Feeling is then the great and legitimate store-

house of the poet, and out of that he draws, not only visions splendid as the outgoings of the morning and the evening, but also the character of the invisible world. From the impress upon feeling, from the clear image in the depths of emotion, he seeks the moral order of life, the purpose of God, the law of destiny. The power by which the poet works is imagination, the power of vision and the creator of the artistic symbol; thus we have the truth and the style of the poet. No better definition of truth can be given than that of Edwards, who makes it the image of existence, the correspondence of mind with reality, of thought with being. The poet's piercing eye reaches to the heart of reality, and his artistic power creates for the reality a faithful, significant, and beautiful symbol. It is because the great poets possess this reach and reliableness of vision, that it is believed that they have a noble and powerful message concerning human destiny. We must seek their contribution to faith in the immortal life in their treatment of feeling, in the ideas they educe from it, and in the splendid forms they provide for it.

In the eleventh book of the Odyssey we have the Homeric idea of immortality. The hero of that poem makes a journey to the under-world, where the strengthless dead lead a meagre and sorrowful existence. There gathered to meet him "spirits from out of Erebus of those now dead

and gone, — brides and unwedded youths, and worn old men, delicate maids with hearts but new to sorrow, and many pierced with brazen spears, men slain in fight, wearing their blood-stained armor." [1] Homer contemplates death as a calamity; with him, life after death is a helpless existence in the regions of murky gloom. Odysseus, in his entrance to Hades, first met the spirit of his man Elpenor, whose body still lay unburied in the earth. "I wept to see him," says the Master, "and pitied him from my heart." Next came the spirit of his dead mother. "She knew me instantly," he says. Her anxious question is, "My child, how came you in this murky gloom, while still alive?" "Awful to the living are these sights." Odysseus adds, "I yearned, though my mind hesitated to clasp the spirit of my mother, even though dead. Three times the impulse came; my heart urged me to clasp her. Three times out of my arms like a shadow or a dream she flitted, and the sharp pain about my heart grew only more." It is the condition of all the dead. "Like a dream the spirit flies away." Next came the spirit of Agamemnon sorrowing. He knew Odysseus instantly, "and then he cried aloud and let the big tears fall, and stretched forth his hands eagerly to grasp me. But no, there was no strength or vigor left, such as was once within

[1] *Odyssey*, Book XI., p. 166, tr. by Prof. G. H. Palmer. All the quotations are from this translation.

his supple limbs. I wept to see him, and I pitied him from my heart." "Mock not at death, glorious Odysseus," says the spirit of Achilles. "Better to be the hireling of a stranger, and serve a man of mean estate whose living is small, than be the ruler over all these dead and gone." The spirit of Ajax, whom Odysseus had defeated on earth in the contest for the armor of Achilles, still nursed his wrath and would not speak, but "went his way after the other spirits of those dead and gone on into Erebus." Through all these examples runs the same idea; the future life is but a shadow of the present. Homer's description of the world of the dead is penetrated with infinite pathos; in it is reflected the morning sorrow of the world. There is in that wonderful eleventh book no murmur of the "strengthless dead" against the fate that has decreed their sad reduction of being. Silent, sorrowful submission reigns among the "spectres of toil-worn men;" an ineffable sadness and beauty is in the picture. The idea of the life after death has not yet become moral; it is the idea of the faded sensuous existence; yet there is in it the prophecy of a transforming morality. The humanness, the sadness, the silent submission and the beauty of those dead and gone, as they stand in the poet's imagination, are the beginnings of better things. Feeling will yet yield higher ideas, faith will put on fairer forms.

Dante has the advantage over Homer of two thousand years of human struggle and thought, the infinite advantage of life in the Christian centuries. "What characterized the Homeric age was its fresh sense of the reality of life and its interests; hence the poet of the Iliad and the Odyssey could introduce the world of the dead only as a shadowy and spectral existence at the extreme verge of his picture of the living world. But to the highest consciousness of the Middle Ages it might almost be said that the parts were inverted, and that the world of the living was but a shadowy appearance, through which the eternal realities of another world were continually betraying themselves."[1] The questioning, scrutinizing, and perplexed intellect is never wanting in Dante, although he has chosen to present the whole realm of reality, as he was able to conclude respecting it, in the imaginative dress and sublime symbolism of his immortal vision. There is a large accidental and perishable element in the thought of even the greatest writers, and in discounting this, the danger is of going too far, and missing the monumental expression given to the higher and permanent spiritual conviction of the race. Through the antiquated science of Dante, and through his no less antiquated theology; through the strange, grotesque, and terrible forms that he has given to the threefold aspect of the eternal

[1] Prof. Edward Caird, *Literature and Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 10.

world, there shines the luminous insight of the poet into the moral order of the universe, his glowing vision of the largely answering realms of spiritual reality. After the whole mass of the accidental has been swept away from the thought of Dante, there lies in that great imagination a vast and faithful image of the abiding order of man's life. He early found the clew to the worth of life and the interpretation of the universe in the love that changed his whole being, and that burned with a vaster and purer flame on to the end. Up the shining rounds of the transfigured earthly passion he was able to rise until he looked upon the supreme glory of God.

> "From that time forward what I saw was greater
> Than our discourse, that to such vision yields,
> And yields the memory unto such excess
> Even as he who seeth in a dream,
> And after dreaming the imprinted passion
> Remains, and to his mind the rest returns not,
> Even such am I, for almost utterly
> Ceases my vision, and distilleth yet
> Within my heart the sweetness born of it."[1]

In sending a friend the Paradiso, Dante ends the letter that accompanied the gift with the following words: "And because the beginning and source being found, namely, God, there is nothing further to be sought, — since he is the Alpha and Ómega, that is the beginning and the end, — this treatise terminates in God, who is blessed forever."[2]

[1] *Paradiso*, xxxiii. 55–63.

[2] *The New Life*, tr. by Prof. Charles Eliot Norton, p. 168.

As in every work of art the end is foreseen from the beginning, and what is last in execution is first in thought, so throughout the poem, whose goal is the Eternal Goodness, it is inevitable that there should be numberless evidences of the shaping power of this supreme idea. Dante's scheme of life is framed in the "Eternal Light," and it is the force and consistency and sincerity of his application to human existence of the thought of God that constitutes his main contribution to faith. Nor must the intense moralism of the poet be overlooked as an indirect but potent influence: his sense of the momentousness of man's earthly career, the untold significance of his choices, the sacredness of human relations, the infinite worth of goodness, and the infinite guilt of sin. To Dante, the moral universe is vitally and profoundly one. Self-will in the creature become unalterable, self-will subject to change and purification, and self-surrender to the eternal grace, all concern the Supreme Being; Hell and Purgatory and Paradise all witness to the unity of the moral world, all testify to a system of rational existences no one of whom can cease to be; all are evidence of a stupendous solidarity and sublime hierarchy of intelligent beings. As I have already hinted, this vast conception is independent of the theology of Dante and the Catholic church of the Middle Ages. It has life in itself, and has become part of the permanent faith

of the world. "We might even, from this point of view, be tempted to regard Dante's representation of the other world as a mere artistic form under which the universal meaning of our present life is conveyed. For, even if Dante did not mean to say this, his work says it to us."[1] This underlying idea of unity, solidarity, and hierarchy in Dante's "mystic and unfathomable song" is another aspect of the monumental expression that he has given to moral reality. Down through the terrible abyss of Hell, up the weary slopes of Purgatory, and through the circles of Paradise in their increasing splendor, one sublime idea is carried, the idea of duty. From the nethermost circle of the Inferno to the sphere of rest and the visible presence of God in the Paradiso, the same all-embracing and all-governing conception is carried. As gravitation binds into one the physical universe, atom to atom in darkness, and sun to sun in light, binds them round some central luminary, so moral law joins in one the universe of intelligences, soul to soul in woe and heart to heart in bliss, and gathers all round God, the Supreme Intelligence. The force of such a conception is elemental, and its power, when joined to the style and filled with the spirit of Dante, to perpetuate and increase faith in the immortal life, is incalculable. After

[1] *Theology and Ethics of Dante in Literature and Philosophy*, vol. i. p. 35.

all its perishable features have been discovered and discerned, there still remain in the Divine Comedy insight and power enough to hold an entire civilization to faith in the future life of the soul.

The resulting impression of Shakespeare's witness to the grandeur of human life is much the same. The difference of genius duly regarded and the wide contrast in the artistic forms employed, the revelation in both poets of the moral order and meaning of life is an overwhelming concurrent testimony. It is the constant triumph of goodness in Shakespeare's representation, his persistent although qualified optimism, that makes his greater tragedies suggest more than they depict. At the close they do not oppress the mind with the feeling of hopeless finality; they have so involved character with supersensuous worlds and so informed it with moral values, that they expand behind the curtain, as it falls upon the dead Lear and Cordelia, upon the dead Moor and Desdemona, into another act and scene. Human life is here fragmentary. Blinded by passion, crossed by forces over which it has no command, overborne by the relentless rush of world-powers, it still moves on to moral results, and the storm of tragedy serves but to display the richness and beauty of the light that never was on land or sea. Life, in Shakespeare's view, is something vast, intricate, sorrowful, terrible, and unfathomable; it

is involved as in a struggle with fate. Still, it is the child of moral order, with the gateway ever open into the freedom of the Father's house.

It is much to have represented life as it is, to have uncovered through dramatic forms the age-long battle between right and wrong, to have shown the invincibility and triumph of goodness in the midst of temptation and in the heart of physical disaster, the defeat and despair of wickedness even when successful in its malign devices; to have thrown upon the vast screen of an incomparable art the whole moral conflict of history, and to have demonstrated the absolute independence, on the part of goodness, of all sensuous return. This Shakespeare has done in his great tragedies, and herein consists his vast service to the higher faith of the race. His Richard III. and his Iago are his revelation of the defeat of evil, and the ruin and despair that wait upon malice and wrong-doing, even when most potent and outwardly successful. His Cordelia and Desdemona prove the superiority of character to circumstances, of love to death; they prove the supersensuousness of true goodness, its noble self-sufficiency, and they hint at the eternal world that is all its own. The highest faith is vindicated when in Othello the beautiful victim dies with a benediction upon her tongue, and the Moor expires upon the kiss gathered from the lips of the dead, and Iago is there to see it, bound and bleed-

ing and in torment, as if his soul were wrapt in sheets of flame.[1] Shakespeare's world is moral to the core, and the moral is in tremendous struggle with the unmoral. The moral is supreme here, and although often baffled, it rises from disaster to a new empire over the hearts of men. This entire independence of outward things on the part of genuine goodness, when combined with its power of revival from physical defeat, and its renewed and extended mastery over the world, constitutes a sublime prophecy of immortality. Goodness can live and rejoice, as in Cordelia, without outward power; and yet from the outward ruin to which it is reduced, it rises to captivate the world. Independent of external adjustments, it yet goes into the hereafter to complete its holy and beautiful life in the perfect environment. Carlyle was right in gathering the comfort of immortal hope from the Shakespearean song, the song with which Tennyson sung himself, like the ascending and unreturning spirit that he was, out of our sight.

> "Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
> Nor the furious winter rages;
> Thou thy worldly task hast done,
> Home hast gone and ta'en thy wages."

In the judgment of some there is a direct treatment of the question of immortality in the

[1] Professor Dowden, *Shakespeare: His Mind and Art*, pp. 230–244.

sonnets. The problem of the sonnets is the contest with time. Is there any escape from this destroyer? There is such a thing as racial continuity. The father dies, but lives on in the life of his son. The individual perishes, but the race survives. That is the first step in the victory over time. To physical immortality may be added ideal immortality, the immortality of fame; but these conquests are poor indeed. The poet comes finally to the immortality of the spirit. Shakespeare commits a terrible sin, he feels the horribleness of moral evil; he feels also the power of love, and that leads him to the life "builded far from accident."

> "Love is not love
> Which alters when it alteration finds.
> O no! it is the ever-fixéd mark
> That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
> It is the star to every wandering bark,
> Whose worth 's unknown, although his height be taken."

Shakespeare does not follow up his clew. We see him confronting the destroyer Time with the sword of the spirit, but the battle is not fought out into clear victory. The nearest approach to triumph is made in the familiar sonnet entitled "Soul and Body."

> "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
> Foiled by these rebel powers that thee array,
> Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
> Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?

"Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?

"Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:

"So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there 's no more dying then."

Wordsworth is our next teacher, and we shall find that he carries us farther. He had to begin with a profound sense of the harmony that exists between the spirit of man and the outward world; indeed, that world may be said to be for him a manifestation of the Presence "far more deeply interfused," a world wherein from "the meanest flower that blows" to "the light of setting suns," everything becomes a token of the Eternal Spirit. Wordsworth had likewise a deep and fruitful sense of the worth of the primary and universal in feeling. The common and inevitable yield of the human heart is always regarded by him as sacred and infinitely significant; one instance of this regard, among many others that might be cited, being the familiar ballad, "We are Seven." To these articles of Wordsworth's poetic creed must be added his faith in man, in whose being there is something that constrains and rewards confidence, in whose life there is a meaning very high and solemn, and a prophecy that fills the

whole future with the light of better things.[1] It is therefore wholly characteristic that Wordsworth should take the idea of immortality into the light of the primitive and supernal affections, and test its value there. He believed that the stream of feeling is purest at the source; farther down it is discolored by the wastes through which it sweeps, and by the interests into whose service it is pressed. Return to the fountain, and there learn the original and uncorrupted character of the stream; ascend the river of human experience to the child-consciousness, and beyond the polluting admixtures in the heavenly from the earthly life, listen to the utterance of nature upon human destiny. Better, infinitely, is Wordsworth's own comparison. The soul is a star, and rises in the dimness of being; but swiftly earthly knowledge comes like a sunrise, and although the star is immeasurably greater than the sun, still the nearness of the sun throws into obscurity and finally swallows up utterly the older starry illumination. Go back, therefore, to the early morning of life, the dim dawn of being, the twilight of existence; return to the child-consciousness, and there behold the soul in the full splendor of its immortality. This is the approach to the great ode that so many praise and so few understand. By the power of recollection the poet once again stands in the mood of his earliest years:

[1] For an admirable analysis of Wordsworth's ruling ideas, see *Literature and Philosophy*, vol. i. pp. 174–189.

"There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Appareled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen, I now can see no more."

To the child-consciousness, the world and life are divine, are parts of the living garment of God; and the soul's kinship with God is a truth indubitable and the alliance of its being with his is forever. Upon this consciousness Wordsworth builds in his great poem. I believe that it is answered by the consciousness of every sensitive, intelligent, representative child. To the consciousness of the genuine and fortunate child, the world is a dream of beauty, life is a dream of love, and God, in the conserving grace and might of his being, is passing through both. That early consciousness is lost through the clash of wills, the contrarieties of interest, and the inevitable discords of developed existence. It is recoverable by the gifted mind, by the poet through recollection, and its significance thus becomes part of the intellectual heritage of the world. The consciousness itself, I think, hardly any one will deny; the poet's interpretation of that admitted consciousness is another matter. Here it is in a majesty of utterance that no amount of familiarity can rob of its freshness and power: —

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that riseth with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day."

This is magnificent poetry; but is it truth? If one would be in a position to ascertain, one must put himself in sympathy with the poet. Recall as far as may be the contents of the child-heart, the veneration for beauty, the tenderness in the presence of suffering, the indignation over outrage, the applause of worth, the passion of love for all high and heroic things, exquisite susceptibility, beautiful feeling, mystic insight, an easy although indefinable possession of God, and life in everlasting alliance with God; this is the consciousness of a genuine child in a truly fortunate home. To such a child "the earth and every common sight" is indeed "appareled in celestial light." Wordsworth sees the fact; it had been

a radiant reality in his own child-life. It is not a beautiful illusion, but a glorious fragment of reality that calls for interpretation. What shall the interpretation be? Is this consciousness the effect of a noble inheritance and a beautiful environing home? Yes, doubtless; but what are these apart from the Supreme Spirit? Man inherits the conditions under which he thinks and feels, his bone, his blood and brain; but does he inherit that which thinks and feels, his soul? The conditions of personal existence do come to him by ordinary generation, but personality itself, self-consciousness and self-determination, the power by which he knows himself and the world, and lives a life accountable to right, — is it not meaningless to say that he inherits this? Can parents part with personality and yet retain it, divide themselves and yet remain undivided and whole; and can the children make any use of the bequest of these broken unities of being? Is it not better philosophy to regard personality as a fresh creation from God's hand, a new being out of God's love, a spirit sent out of his heart on a human mission and with an outfit of latent powers, which powers are afterwards the highest evidence of its divine origin and destiny; its power to reduce the world to the order of thought, its faculty of moral insight, its endowment of feeling, its capacity for immortal love? So Wordsworth believed, and the high thought to which he

has given expression so magnificent has the support, in its scientific shape, of the greatest names in the whole history of philosophy. The antenatal spirit that Plato assumed as the only adequate explanation of life; the distinct, logically prior and formative intellect that Aristotle regarded as the necessity of knowledge; the innate ideas of Descartes, and the common sense of Reid; above all, the grand contention of Kant for a mind anterior to experience as the condition of experience, and as, in fact, the creator and controller of it, are but the vision of Wordsworth reduced to exact and scientific form. It is therefore the vision and the sound appreciation of a supreme fact that make the poet's inmost heart exult: —

> "O joy! that in our embers
> Is something that doth live,
> That nature yet remembers
> What was so fugitive!
> The thought of our past years in me doth breed
> Perpetual benediction: not indeed
> For that which is most worthy to be blest;
> Delight and liberty, the simple creed
> Of childhood, whether busy or at rest.
> . . . . . .
> Not for these I raise
> The song of thanks and praise;
> . . . . . .
> But for those first affections,
> Those shadowy recollections,
> Which, be they what they may,
> Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
> Are yet a master light of all our seeing;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

If one may venture, without impertinence, to translate Wordsworth's thought out of his matchless poetic expression into common prose, it is, that since the soul is anterior to this sensuous dream of time, and wears in its earliest appearance here the tokens of a nobler origin, since its primitive outfit in insight and feeling proclaim the source of its being to be divine, we are justified in believing that when it has passed through this world of discipline it returns to the presence of God; being spiritual in origin, it is immortal in destiny. The child-soul arrives here, a bird of paradise, wearing upon its wings the blue of the eternal sky, and colored on breast and crest by the supernal beauty amid which it has lived; mysteriously it has migrated hither, a bright token of other and better worlds, and when it disappears in death it is but the flight home to its native

clime. It is the great merit of Wordsworth that he sees so clearly and truly the value of the native spiritual endowment, that he is compelled to carry it upward to the Supreme Spirit as cause, that he can account but in one way for the living beauty of childhood. Origin determines destiny, and since the soul is supersensuous and divine in the source of its being, it must be non-temporal in the character and duration of it.

Emerson, like Wordsworth, passes into faith in the future life of the soul through childhood; but while the English poet enters through recollections that are wholly happy, the American singer walks to the shining goal under the deep shadow of death: —

> "The south-wind brings
> Life, sunshine, and desire,
> And on every mount and meadow
> Breathes aromatic fire;
> But over the dead he has no power,
> The lost, the lost he cannot restore;
> And looking over the hills, I mourn
> The darling who shall not return."

The course of Emerson's thought, in this truly great poem, it is worth while to indicate somewhat in detail. There is hope for the tree if it is cut down, but the dead are irrevocable: the poem opens thus, and goes on to remark that nature repairs the waste in inferior things, but over man, her best work, she has no such power. Death has changed the relations of parent and child;

the father being no longer the guardian of the truant feet. Sorrowing, he recalls the mystic wisdom and heavenly cheer of the vanished child, and its sweet fascination for all; recalls the festivals of childhood in the presence of the things that once belonged to the darling boy. These reflections make the poet even more profoundly aware of his loss, and lead him to accuse nature of irrational procedure in conserving the inferior and leaving the divine to perish: —

> "There 's not a sparrow or a wren,
> There 's not a blade of autumn grain,
> Which the four seasons do not tend
> And tides of life and increase lend;
> And every chick of every bird,
> And weed and rock-moss is preferred.
> O ostrich-like forgetfulness!
> O loss of larger in the less!
> Was there no star that could be sent,
> No watcher in the firmament,
> No angel from the countless host
> That loiters round the crystal coast,
> Could stoop to heal that only child,
> Nature's sweet marvel undefiled,
> And keep the blossom of the earth,
> Which all her harvests were not worth? "

The poet recovers the purity of grief and comes to see that this boy was born for the world's betterment, and now he joins the world's loss to his own. Just here, when grief becomes noblest, when it puts on the form of supreme regret over the world's loss, faith is born anew. Out of the best thought, even if that thought be of loss,

faith ever comes. The poet disowns his former accusation of nature as unjust; beauty is not vanished, his darling is not lost. The child was a gift lent for a season, and death, early death, was a necessity to the unimpeded and swift advance of such a spirit: —

> "Wilt thou freeze love's tidal flow,
> Whose streams through nature circling go?
> Nail the wild star to its track
> On the half-climbed zodiac?"

Emerson finally gives as the basis of belief in the endless life the conviction of the wisest and best souls in all history: —

> "What is excellent
> As God lives is permanent;
> Hearts are dust, heart's loves remain;
> Heart's love will meet thee again."

A new law is now sighted, a law of progress through change, of growth through decay, of life through death. The poet beholds new meaning in God's method in the outward world. God's beautiful heavens are not made of adamant; they are not unchangeable, but resemble rather "the bending reed," "the flowering grass," or "the scented weed," so subject to change are they. More even than this, the "fleeing tent" of the traveler and "the bow above the tempest bent" are signs of the way in which God builds outward beauty. In the outward world nothing is fixed, nothing is finished; the day is ruined every even-

ing and restored every morning, and the seasons are undone one by another, perpetually disappearing and returning. Thus the beauty of the whole outward world is ever-ruined and ever-restored; and Emerson thinks that this method of restoration through ruin must be God's grand method with souls. This fine insight into the whole drift of the material universe so far as it is a world in time is justified by the doctrine of evolution. Whatever may become of individual forms, the aim and achievement of the whole is higher life; disintegration is but the necessary preliminary step to a richer and grander integration. A law analogous to this is visibly at work in the history of humanity, — analogous, but not identical; for the higher life that is here the aim and achievement issues in profounder concern for the individual. The outward rush is still in disregard of present forms of being, is still a conquest of the higher through the abandonment of the lower; but the essential, the soul in each separate being, is now conserved and carried into new and unexpected power. Here is Emerson's expression of this great law, incomparably the loftiest utterance of any American poet: —

> "Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye
> Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
> Not of adamant and gold
> Built He heaven stark and cold;
> No, but a nest of bending reeds,
> Flowering grass and scented weeds;

Or like a traveler's fleeing tent,
Or bow above the tempest bent;
Built of tears and sacred flames,
And virtue reaching to its aims;
Built of furtherance and pursuing,
Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
Silent rushes the swift Lord
Through ruined systems still restored,
Broad-sowing, bleak and void to bless,
Plants with worlds the wilderness;
Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow.
House and tenant go to ground,
Lost in God, in God head found."

In his "Essay on Immortality," equally remarkable both for its frankness and reserve, and wonderfully interesting and valid in its tone and character, Emerson makes another, perhaps a further confession of faith. In that work we see his mind moving through rare insights, rich and trustworthy courses of thought, and an atmosphere of the noblest feeling, to conclusions that are decidedly affirmative. "The preliminary conviction" of all sound thinking on this momentous theme, "that if it be best that conscious personal life shall continue, it will continue," is taken as the point of departure, and the steady movement of the essay is toward the result that we may reasonably believe that it is best that we should go on. Our interest in the endless and infinite is but the symbol of our capacity and desire; and as supporting us in the belief that these capacities and desires will be matched with corresponding oppor-

tunities, we are told that they are the veritable word of God, and "the Creator always keeps his word with us." Emerson's whole treatment of the subject in his essay is that of a poet. He looks upon faith in the future life as it assumes its earliest and crudest form in Egypt, as it takes on a more rational character in Greece, and as it appears in Christianity in full spiritual maturity, always in the light of feeling; and it is from feeling that all his considerations are adduced in support of faith. After all has been said, he avows himself a "better believer" than he is an expositor of his belief, and he is sure that the best writing upon Immortality leaves unwritten and unexpressed the really great forces of conviction. Life — that is, moral feeling — speaks on its own account, and in its reaches of vision and power of assurance goes utterly beyond the narrow limits of conscious exposition. It is feeling that reflects itself in Emerson's fine imagination, and that stimulates him to do justly by it in his written word, and that quietly tells him, after his best word is spoken, that itself, the great primary fact of moral life, is a vaster prophet on its own behalf. It is wholly in keeping with Emerson's treatment of the question, both in his poem and in his essay, that the man himself should become the strongest witness to the truth of his faith. His integrity is so rare, his heart so pure, his will so steadfast in support of duty, his spirit so "per-

meated and perfumed with airs of heaven" and so manifestly master of the higher knowledge and life, that he comes into the poor debating societies of the schools like one commissioned, not to construct an argument, but to state a fact; not to propound a theory, but to make an authoritative revelation. He repeats the words of the imperial Stoic with even added emphasis, "It is well to die if there be gods, and sad to live if there be none;" he writes as one who is willing to live or die, "because he has seen the thread on which the beads are strung, and perceived that it reaches up and down, existing quite independently of the present illusions."

It would require a separate essay to do anything like justice to the full bearing of Browning's thought upon the future life; still, so great a name must not be passed over in entire silence. Browning is a voluminous writer, and has nowhere concentrated his genius, as Tennyson has done, in one supreme utterance upon our theme; but his rich ideas must be gathered as they lie scattered in the pages of many separate works; so that for several reasons he is a somewhat difficult subject for the end now in view. All that can be attempted at this time are a few general statements, supported by references to the poet's works.

Browning's thought bears upon the endless value of human life in two supreme ways, and along these lines his special contribution is made;

the first being the religious consciousness that sees the absoluteness of good, and the second the moral consciousness that beholds the function of the individual will and the force of individual experience in the evolution of the soul. The most fundamental of all Browning's conceptions is that the whole meaning of life, from the divine side, consists in the realization of the ideal; and from the human side, in the evolution of the good. This conception is not an *a priori* dream imposed upon a world of confusion, but an insight gathered from the heart of the troubled world. Browning's faith that, because God rules, all things are ordered for the best, is held side by side with a doctrine of morality that sees in choice the most momentous issues; and the value of his optimism lies largely in the fact that he takes us into the spheres of conflict, and there discovers good in advance upon universal dominion, and evil in retreat upon annihilation. Sin and its punishment are instruments of illumination, not because there is merit of any kind in them, but because man is essentially rational, and is forever reacting upon a world that is essentially divine. This double idea of the realization of a divine plan and the evolution of the good is the dominating one in Rabbi Ben Ezra: —

> "He fixed thee in this dance
> Of plastic circumstance,
> This present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest:

Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed."

If for the moment we must think of man in God's hands as clay upon the potter's wheel, take the figure at its best, perceiving that the potter does not make to mar; and if the work is marred and must be broken, it is that it be re-made, and thus we are bidden: —

"Look not down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, the lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The master's lips a-glow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what need'st thou with earth's wheel?"

It is but natural that we should have this with which to close the poem: —

"So, take and use Thy work:
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!"

In all these passages the dominant conception is of a shaping ideal, an educating and perfecting spirit at work upon human life; but the other aspect of the truth, the evolution of the highest through individual struggle, receives expression in the same poem: —

"Rejoice we are allied
To That which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!

A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe."

The religious appeal and the moral response, the divine stimulus and the human reaction, are thus presented: —

"Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand, but go!
Be our joy three parts pain!
Strive and hold cheap the strain;
Learn nor account the pang; dare never grudge the throe!"

But coming to particulars, we find that the religious consciousness in Browning divides into two constituent elements, the vision of good everywhere present in the world, and the ultimate complete triumph of good over evil. The presence of good even in the lives of the most abandoned is nowhere portrayed with greater power than in the first scene of "Pippa Passes." There are Ottima and Sebald with double guilt upon their souls, the guilt of murder and the prior guilt of outrage done to the sanctity of home. Sebald is inclined, as the great calm morning rises upon him and his wretched partner in crime, to uncover the face of the terrible deed that they have done, to look at it honestly, and to acknowledge it as his own. From this Ottima would turn him away, as inevitably dooming their joy; and with a splendid recital of the history of the evil infatuation, she subdues Sebald's conscience, drugs his reflec-

tive power, intoxicates him once more with her charms, reëstablishes her dominion over him, and calls to him: —

> "Crown me your queen, your spirit's arbitress,
> Magnificent in sin. Say that!
> *Sebald.* I crown you
> My great white queen, my spirit's arbitress
> Magnificent" . . .

The sentence is unfinished; "the Amen stuck in his throat;" for Pippa sings as she passes: —

> "God 's in his heaven,
> All 's right with the world."

The simple but wonderful song resurrects the buried ideal, and, like a sunrise upon a desolated world, it throws into awful revelation Sebald's interior life: —

> "I see what I have done
> Entirely now. Oh, I am proud to feel
> Such torments — let the world take credit thence —
> I, having done my deed, pay too its price!
> I hate, hate — curse you! God 's in his heaven!"

There is no other way than through burning hate of the seducing and dominating spirit in which to show the revulsion in the moral nature of the man; but the good has a stronger foothold in the miserable woman, when, seeing her lover about to kill himself, she cries: —

> "Me! no, no, Sebald, not yourself — kill me,
> Mine is the whole crime."

And in her last words over his lifeless body: —

> "Not to me, to him, O God, be merciful!"

Here, in the lowest depths of crime and shame, one soul is alive with the sense of righteousness, and the other is swathed in the fires of love. Souls that can so hate and curse sin, and that can so love, are still under the dominion of the good, are the subjects of the divine purpose that works upon them in terrible benignity and finds an answer in their inmost souls. The vindication at once of the majesty of moral law and the faith that claims the worst as capable of the best was never more truly or powerfully made. It would be easy to quote passages almost endlessly from Browning's works, going to show the universal energy of the good upon the moral nature of man.

"Beneath the veriest ash, there hides a spark of soul
Which, quickened by love's breath, may yet pervade the whole
O' the grey, and free again, be fire." [1]

The second great constituent of the religious consciousness as it appears in Browning is the conviction of the complete ultimate triumph of good over evil. The method is a costly one even for the Divine.

"Would I suffer for him that I love? So would'st thou — so wilt thou." [2]

Perhaps the blackest of all Browning's dramatic creations is the Count Guido. "In his agony he summons every helper whom he has known or heard of: —

'Abate, — Cardinal, — Christ, — Maria, — God,' —

[1] *Fifine at the Fair*, xliii. [2] *Saul*, xviii.

And then the light breaks through the blackest gloom: —

'Pompilia! will you let them murder me?'

In this supreme moment he has known what love is, and, knowing it, has begun to feel it. The cry, like the intercession of the rich man in Hades, is a promise of a far-off deliverance." [1] The poet's view of even such a character may be gathered from the words of the Pope in "The Ring and the Book:" —

"I stood at Naples once, a night so dark
I could have scarce conjectured there was earth
Anywhere, sky or sea or world at all:
But the night's black was burst through by a blaze —
Thunder struck blow on blow, earth groaned and bore
Through her whole length of mountain visible:
There lay the city thick with spires,
And, like a ghost disshrouded, white the sea.
So may the truth be flashed out by one blow,
And Guido see, one instant, and be saved.
Else I avert my face, nor follow him
Into that sad obscure sequestered state
Where God unmakes but to remake the soul
He else made first in vain; *which must not be.*" [2]

Of all Browning's utterances upon the final issue of the conflict of good and evil in the universe, the most impressive, in my opinion, is the last stanza of his "Apparent Failure." On a trip to Paris Browning must visit the "Doric little Morgue," as other travelers do to this day.

[1] Dr. Westcott, quoted by Henry Jones, *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 124.

[2] *The Ring and the Book*, 2119–2133.

Broken-hearted ambition, red-handed socialism, satiated or maddened lust, —

> "Three men who did most abhor
> Their life in Paris yesterday
> So killed themselves: and now enthroned
> Each on his copper couch, they lay
> Fronting me, waiting to be owned."

The poet takes in all sides of the tragic sight, notes that "each coat dripped by its owner's bed," perceives in the sickening affair the working of stern and just law, asks in profoundest pity,

> "Poor men, God made, and all for that!"

and then throws over all the transfiguring light of this faith: —

> "My own hope is, a sun will pierce
> The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
> That after Last returns the First,
> Though a wide compass round be fetched;
> That what began best, can't end worst,
> Nor what God blessed once, prove accurst."

The strength of the religious feeling in Browning yields him this intuition and faith, — the intuition of the ideal as a universal and powerful presence in human life, and the faith that goodness must at last conquer evil. But the ethical feeling is equally strong in this poet, and is maintained throughout his work in sternest integrity. This magnificent moralism of Browning makes one all the more willing to trust his religious optimism; for no Old School theologian ever laid greater stress upon the power of choice.

> "No, when the fight begins within himself
> A man 's worth something. God stoops o'erhead,
> Satan looks up between his feet,— both tug —
> He 's left, himself, i' the middle."[1]

And again in "The Ring and the Book:" —

> "Life's business being just the terrible choice."

But this first constituent of the moral consciousness must never be separated — so it would appear that Browning holds — from the second, the illuminating power of sinful experience, as the sinful soul reacts upon the moral order of the world. That sublime scene in "Easter-Day" where the soul is "found and fixed" —

> "Choosing the world. The choice was made;
> And naked and disguiseless stayed,
> And unevadable, the fact" —

is a parable of the moral education of man. The education comes through the issues of the evil choice: —

> "Miser, there waits the gold for thee!
> Hater, indulge thine enmity!
> And thou, whose heaven self-ordained
> Was to enjoy earth unrestrained,
> Do it!"

All the world is before the selfish choice: but what is nature when the "plenitude" of beauty is withdrawn; what is art when the Divine face that all highest art seeks to make visible is forever turned away; what are philosophy and science when forbidden to chase the infinite; what then

[1] "Bishop Blougram."

is the choice of the world instead of God but a joy that turns to dust and ashes! Thus Browning, seeing clearly that sin rises out of the thirst for joy, ill-informed and refusing to become better informed, is able to prophesy of its final issues. The soul that chooses the world, and finds in all nature, art, philosophy, and science, with God left out, nothing but everlasting illusion, falls back into the remnant of love:—

> "Is this thy final choice?
> Love is the best? 'T is somewhat late!
> . . . Now take love! Well betide
> Thy tardy conscience!"

The deepest lesson of "Paracelsus" is the same. The foolish dream is scattered by the winds of circumstance; the wild soul is tamed through suffering; the self-will and the contempt are finally surrendered as evil, and not good; the life before despised and rejected, having been commended by the illuminations of experience, is accepted at the last. This reversal of evil choice through the moral discipline of life finds much subtle and valid exposition in Browning, and deserves ampler treatment than I can give it here. It is the companion truth to his idea of the determinative force of choice, the final stage in the education of the individual and the race.

Here, then, are the main lines along which Browning sends his great contribution to our theme. The fullness of the religious feeling, issu-

ing in insight and foresight, — insight into "the soul of good in things evil," and foresight of the final victory of good over evil, — and the strength of the moral feeling, emphasizing the momentousness of individual choice and the illuminative and redemptive power of experience in God's righteous and merciful world, make Browning of first importance in relation to faith in the endless future of the soul. His whole profoundly spiritual and ethical view of life, based as it is upon a wide survey of human history, upon deep acquaintance with man's nature, and upon prophetic insight into the purpose of creation, and in particular the purpose of God concerning our race, lodges the sympathetic mind, with a force almost supernatural, in certain assurance of the immortality of the soul. His last words, spoken out of the sunset, ring with the contagious force of conviction, and with Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" — a calmer but not a stronger voice, also out of the sunset — constitute a most precious memorial of faith, and an invigorating impulse to a like assurance in less gifted minds: —

"One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."

"No, at noon-day in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!

Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
'Strive and thrive'! cry 'speed! fight on, fare ever
There as here.'" [1]

Of all poets, ancient or modern, Tennyson is the foremost in his treatment of the high theme of immortality. He had nearly all the qualifications for a final poetic utterance upon the destiny of the soul. His mind had gone over the entire question. He came to it in a horror of great darkness. Life had suddenly turned from beauty to ashes, and his muse from the garment of praise to the spirit of heaviness. In the untimely death of Arthur Henry Hallam, Tennyson had lost his dearest friend. Love and grief together wrought a new epoch in the soul of the poet, and hence the "In Memoriam." Love between young men has not been rare in the history of the world, and Tennyson's for Hallam is not without parallels among men of his own vocation. As a recent writer has observed, Shelley's love for Keats, and Milton's for Lycidas, and Shakespeare's for his unknown friend, are analogous.[2] But we have to go into Hebrew history for a sentiment so pure, passionate, and permanent in the relation of man to man. The friendship of Alfred Tennyson and Arthur Henry Hallam is in English history what the friendship of David and Jonathan is in Hebrew history. David's words over his

[1] Epilogue to *Asolando.*

[2] John F. Genung, *Tennyson's In Memoriam.*

dead friend, "Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women," must have been in Tennyson's heart when he wrote of his dead friend, —

"More than my brothers are to me."

This love and grief were Tennyson's moral qualifications for the consideration of the future life. His mind, deeply versed in the best thought of the past, at home in all the questions of his age, in sympathetic touch with the heart of man in all ages, and his genius for poetry were his intellectual qualifications. No man can estimate aright the worth of "In Memoriam" who does not bear these things in mind. Loss, inexpressible loss, opened the poet's eyes to the appalling fact of death. Love made him eager to believe in immortality, and able to conceive of that immortality in the noblest, and so in the most credible form. His subtle, questioning intellect made belief difficult, and thus raised the issue, Is the soul, after all, a deathless thing? It was the pressure of this dark problem of the intellect upon the heart that gave us "In Memoriam." The poet has there recorded the history of his intellectual and spiritual struggle. He has, in the first quarter of the poem, given the freest utterance to his loss and regret; allowing the varying moods of unmitigated grief to clothe themselves in words that fit their own sad music. Here Tennyson is of the greatest service. It is

the first mood of grief. The yew-tree, with its "thousand years of gloom," is the symbol of the world.

> "Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
> That name the underlying dead,
> Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
> Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.
>
> "The seasons bring the flower again,
> And bring the firstling to the flock;
> And in the dusk of thee, the clock
> Beats out the little lives of men."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
> Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
> I seem to fail from out my blood,
> And grow incorporate into thee."

The first preparation for a final answer to the difficulties of the intellect is, to gather them into a supremely urgent question; similarly, the primary need, in the quest for the adequate and immortal consolation, is, duly to conceive the range and gloom of the sorrow. This the poet does through his image of the "yew-tree;" it is the black and fixed background to the melancholy joys and hopeless brevity and littleness of human life. His grief overspread the whole earth and sky, and for him, to borrow Byron's strong words, —

> "The bright sun was extinguish'd and the stars
> Did wander darkling in eternal space,
> Rayless and pathless; and the icy earth
> Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air."

But love lives and prevails in the heart of the sorrowing poet, and out of love comes faith. Nothing is truer than this, that the heart that loves cannot always doubt, must finally trust the order of the world and the purpose of the Supreme. As an example of splendid faith, unable as yet to realize the fullness of its strength, the stability of its foundations, and the range and character of its implicit conclusions, take the following poem of W. E. Henley: —

"Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul."

"In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but not bowed.

"Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade;
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

This surely is the desperate expression of a faith intrinsically great. The primacy of soul could hardly receive more powerful utterance, and the man who is so certain of the soul should not find it difficult to rest in the deeper certainty of God.

The remarkable thing about Mr. Henley's poem is that it unites with a profound distrust of the universe a spiritual consciousness that might serve as foundation for a vast and conquering faith. What the spiritual consciousness fails to do in Mr. Henley, it achieves in Tennyson. Love puts the question, Is man wholly of time? and sends the poet forth in quest of an adequate answer. The universe within whose circles of gloom this glorious sentiment of love can live even for a little while cannot be the monster it seems; it may conceal behind the black mask an infinite benignity. At least, it is worth while to send forth the intellect in the service of love. In the largest ways, in ways that are entirely befitting poetry, and that reach and encircle the strongest and richest thoughts, the remainder of the great poem seeks for love an immortal support. The contribution that Tennyson makes is that it is morally inconceivable that love is perishable. The persistence of love in the bereaved heart here, and its mighty, its everlasting effect, lead to the faith that love persists there, a celestial influence moulding the heavenly life. It is the moral worth of love that first inspires faith, that recovers it in temporary loss: —

> "If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
> I heard a voice 'believe no more,'
> And heard an ever-breaking shore
> That tumbled in the Godless deep;

> "A warmth within the breast would melt
> The freezing reason's colder part,
> And like a man in wrath the heart
> Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'"

Tennyson's idea of the human relationship is so essentially noble, that of soul living into soul, of spirit aiding and educating spirit, of heart enabling heart to compass the world in a ministry of love, that his moral idealism becomes a vast contribution to faith in the endless life. The apostle's words express the finest result of the poem: "Love never faileth."

It is wholly fitting that from love in its utter nobility as subsisting between his friend and himself Tennyson should rise to the Christ, the Immortal Love. To do so is simply to look at love in its supreme manifestation. It is not a jump from positive knowledge to things that lie wholly in the realm of faith; it is but going from the less to the greater, from the sample of love in the poet's own heart to the sovereign love in the heart of the Christ. Of course, in so far as the poet accepts the outward history of the Christ love, and in so far as he infers that, as it fared with that, so it will fare with his and with all human love, he is clearly in the region of faith. Still, the movement of the poem is in the spiritual rather than in the supernatural as that word is commonly understood. The poem as a prophecy of immortality has its foundations in fact, the fact

of love and its quality. It meets another fact, Christ love and its history. That history is accepted on faith, and becomes the type of human history. Still, the poem is in a very large sense a poem of the reason, a vital movement of thought through all difficulties into the conviction that God is love and that love is imperishable. Some of its most powerful passages exhibit the moral consequences of the view that makes death the end of all: —

> "My own dim life should teach me this,
> That life shall live for evermore,
> Else earth is darkness at the core,
> And dust and ashes all that is.
>
> . . . "If Death were seen
> At first as Death, Love had not been,
> Or been in narrowest working shut,"
>
> "Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,
> Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape
> Had bruised the herb and crush'd the grape,
> And bask'd and batten'd in the woods."

And still more powerfully: —

> . . . "And he, shall he,
>
> "Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
> Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
> Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
> Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,
>
> "Who trusted God was love indeed
> And love Creation's final law —
> Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
> With ravine, shriek'd against his creed —

"Who lov'd, who suffer'd countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills?

"No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him."

The evolutional argument for immortality, as indeed for the existence of God, has not, until quite recently, found a place in the sympathetic consideration of careful thinkers. It is but a few years since the publication of Mr. John Fiske's little book on "The Destiny of Man," viewed in the light of his origin, and that work had all the effect of a revelation even upon the mass of intelligent readers. So slowly are the philosophical bearings of an admitted fact grasped by the majority of mankind. It is intensely interesting to come upon what may be termed the scientific argument for immortality, outlined with an insight so true, and stated with such matchless power, in Tennyson's poem first given to the world more than forty years ago. Doubtless many thinkers, many years since, have seen the sublime drift of the evolutional process; still, so far as I know, Tennyson heads the list. It is another proof, and a magnificent one, that the poet is the seer and guide in the higher forms of human progress.

"They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread

"In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

"Who throve and branch'd from clime to clime,
The herald of a higher race,
And of himself in higher place,
If so he type this work of time

"Within himself, from more to more;
Or, crowned with attributes of woe
Like glories, move his course, and show
That life is not as idle ore,

"But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot in burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd with the shocks of doom"

"To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast.
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die."

Tennyson builds immortality upon love, and that seems to call for this passion in all that are to live forever. That is indeed the logic of the poem; but the poet hopes that all men will finally love. This, however, is not his dogma, but his dream. A poet without love is, as some one has said, "a physical and metaphysical impossibility," and the poet who treats of this divine affection, and who rises to the level of his theme, becomes almost inevitably a believer in racial redemption from the dominion of selfishness, and

therefore of racial immortality. Whittier is true to his high calling and to the noblest of his class when he sings : —

> "Through all the depths of sin and loss
> Drops the plummet of thy cross,
> Never yet abyss was found
> Deeper than the cross could sound."

Tennyson is less confident ; still, this is the form that the idea of the future life takes in his hands, and it must be said that it adds unspeakably to its moral worth, to its credibleness for the intellect. It is his message to humanity.

> "O yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill,
> To pangs of nature, sins of will,
> Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;
>
> "That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
> That not one life shall be destroy'd,
> Or cast as rubbish to the void,
> When God hath made the pile complete."

As the highest reach of all his reflections and reasonings, the crown of his intuitions and expectations, the best within the circle of knowledge and the divinest in the sphere of faith, Tennyson comes finally to rest love's case with the

> "Strong Son of God, immortal Love."

There the rational movement inspired by the most sacred feeling ends in the assurance of faith. The question ultimately amounts to this, Can we trust the highest in the human heart, and that which in history answers best to it, the Christ ?

Poetry is full of the confessional character, and this is specially true of modern poetry. Wordsworth, Emerson, Browning, and all the really inspired men of genius of our century have a personal creed, and a heartful of high convictions to recite to the world. As they see genius full of an inspired trust in its own findings, men learn to trust their own convictions. Quite aside from the wonderful artistic form, the supreme grace, the entire adequateness and marvelous range of suggestiveness of that lyric of humanity "Crossing the Bar," it has all the contagious power of a great confession. We see that the great poet has made his peace with the universe. His hope has become conviction, and his conviction has risen into faith, — personal, inspired, permanent, and triumphant. We see him under the final experience that awaits all men, and we hear him singing his great calm song of immortal assurance out of the gathering darkness. Where he goes forth with so sure a step and so kingly an air, and with expectation so grand, we are induced to make the same venture, to run the same sublime risk. Tennyson, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, went through the river singing; with this difference, however, that the poet left behind him his victorious song: —

> "Sunset and evening star,
> And one clear call for me!
> And may there be no moaning of the bar,
> When I put out to sea,

"But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

"For though from out our bourne of time and place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PHILOSOPHERS AND IMMORTALITY.

"That will last forever which on account of its excellence and spirit must be an abiding part of the universe." — LOTZE.

"We are already an immortal race." — FERRIER.

"The *summum bonum* then practically is only possible on the supposition of the immortality of the soul." — KANT.

"That which is the foundation of all our hopes and all our fears; all our hopes and fears which are of any consideration: I mean a Future Life." — BUTLER.

"He that would make a real progress in knowledge must dedicate his age as well as his youth, the later growths as well as the first fruits, at the altar of truth." — BERKELEY.

"That God may be all in all." — ORIGEN'S favorite text.

"All things work together for good, in life and death, to the friend of God." — PLATO.

"There can no evil befall a good man, whether he be alive or dead." — SOCRATES.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PHILOSOPHERS AND IMMORTALITY: FAITH AND REASON.

THERE are few scenes in human history more striking than that which took place in the Roman senate, on the trial of the Catiline conspirators. Cæsar is there, whose genius as statesman, soldier, and ruler entitles him to Shakespeare's splendid tribute, "the foremost man of all this world;" and Cicero is there, as much above Cæsar in learning, in eloquence and philosophic insight as he is beneath him in military capacity and executive force. These two men, both great, but contrasted in their greatness, are in the senate this morning when judgment is to be given upon the conspirators. The criminal list is presented. It contains none but the names of those indisputably guilty. In the judgment of all, these traitors to the state deserve the sternest punishment. But what shall that punishment be? Here opinion is no longer unanimous, and on one side stands Rome's greatest soldier and ruler; on the other, her greatest orator and writer.

Cæsar is against the execution of the guilty men. The safety of the state does not require

it; and besides, death is no punishment; it is but the end of human suffering. In the grave there is neither joy nor sorrow. The dead man has ceased to be; he has become as he was before he was born.

"Our little life is rounded with a sleep," and from it there is no awakening. Thus upon the question of immortality the great warrior reasons. In his opinion there is none. Death ends the tragedy of existence. At that hour the curtain falls upon a completed drama that means utter extinction of being. Cæsar's mood is accurately given in the words of Lucretius: "It makes not the least difference to a man, when immortal death has ended his mortal life, that he was ever born at all."[1]

Cicero cannot agree to this, but stands upon other ground. The crisis puts him, as it has put Cæsar, in possession of his real conviction, and this is that death is not the end. All antiquity, he feels, is on his side; and however crude its form, the unvarying verdict of the common consciousness of mankind elicits from Cicero nothing but deep respect. Man's unceasing care is for the future, and thus silently proclaims his immortality. None ever encountered death for country but under a firm persuasion of life beyond the grave. Themistocles might have lived in quiet, and so might Epaminondas; but some-

[1] Lucretius, Book III. 895–898.

how there clings to the human mind a certain presage of future ages. Death does not occasion extinction of being, but only change of abode. The world could not have been made without God; neither could Archimedes the astronomer have imitated the works of God, had he not possessed a divine soul.[1] Thus reasons the most humane, the most accomplished and enlightened, of all the Romans.

That scene in the Roman senate, more than sixty years before the birth of Christ, in which the idea of immortality emerges for discussion in a question of penalty for capital crime, with the most powerful will on the one side and the most competent intellect on the other, is at least a fitting introduction to the special subject of this chapter, the philosophers and the future life. Cæsar, although no philosopher, may still serve as the type of mind to which the idea of existence beyond the grave is incredible. There have been many such minds, and in not a few instances they have been minds of great power. Still, their strength has been for the most part like Cæsar's, judgment in affairs, power to understand and control the material side of life. Like him, they have been insensible to the evidence of the moral government of God, and so immersed in the study of the meaner side of human existence as to become unconscious of the higher.

[1] *Tusculan Discussions.*

There is indeed a middle class, represented by Aristotle, who neither affirm nor deny the future of the soul. They feel themselves entirely incompetent to determine the question. This class, including at least one of the greatest names in the whole history of human thought, I pass over.

Nor have I anything to do here with those who deny, further than the contrasts of the scene in the Roman senate may seem to implicate me. I cannot but believe that on such a question Cicero is a more competent thinker than Cæsar; and again, that the men represented by the great orator are more competent than those represented by the imperial soldier. Doubtless these negative thinkers have done good service. They have served as stimulus to nobler and deeper minds, and by their denial have added intensity to the work of the positive intellect. My concern here, however, is wholly with the affirmative thinkers. They are brought forward, because they have undertaken to justify the idea of immortality. They find it rooted in the heart of mankind; they put it to the test; they pass it on as a trustworthy belief; and we are to consider the value of their vindication. It is not necessary to commit one's self to the argument, as in all points conclusive; but, believing as I do in the truth of the faith in the future life, I am glad to see what other believers have had to say for it.

I begin with a philosopher only recently de-

ceased, whose utterances on this question have been the subject of much meditation and wide acceptance among minds of a certain order and training. Hermann Lotze's life extended from 1817 to 1881; and more than most thinkers he combines the scientific and philosophic interest and power; more than most is he the critic and the constructive thinker, the skeptic and the believer. There are many men among us who have heard from his own lips the words that I am about to quote, and who say they can never forget the quiet but solemn emphasis with which they were spoken: "That will last forever which on account of its excellence and its spirit must be an abiding part of the universe; what lacks that preserving worth will perish." [1]

The value of this impressive criterion of immortality is somewhat lessened by the further remark of Lotze that it is inapplicable in our hands; that is, we are not the final judges of the worth to the universe of our lives. Admitting the truth of this, it may still be possible to reach or anticipate the judgment of the Highest. Lotze's limitation is evidently for logical effect, and we must try to understand his canon irrespective of it.

Whatever is indispensable to the on-going universe will abide; that is this thinker's great premise for the future life. The strength of the premise depends entirely upon what is meant by

[1] *Microcosmus*, vol. i. p. 389.

the universe. The universe may be simply a machine, and in that case all that would seem to be essential would be the repair of its waste. So long as matter and motion are given, the machine-universe is assured of the necessities of life. Excellence is here of no account.

The universe may be simple force; and if so, it is essential to its well-being that no part of force be destroyed. But then the force that is locked up in the individual human life may be released at death, and pass, under a form absolutely new, into the service of the universal life. On this view there would seem to be no hope for man.

These remarks are enough to show the utter barrenness of Lotze's generalization when taken by itself. It is fruitful only when taken in connection with the exalted view of the universe that this philosopher entertained. According to him, the region of sense and fact is subject to the region of invisible law, and both these are subject to the realm of moral worth. God is the Eternal Goodness; law is the method according to which the Eternal Goodness manifests itself; and the world of history, the world of time, is the field in which it is manifested and realized. Thus, truth and beauty and goodness are the highest character, the regulative principle in the universe. We say of a good man that truth is essential to his life, that justice is inseparable from his existence, that tenderness is indispensable to his spirit. Take the

Founder of Christianity as the supreme example. Certain things are essential to him. He can never deceive any soul; he will forever keep his promises with men; no act of injustice, no deed in disregard of the claims of distress and pity, will ever stain his hands. To him the weak and the wicked will be indispensable, and he will come evermore, not to call the righteous, but sinners. The outcasts of humanity he will seek and save; Pharisee and fisherman, publican and thief, he will take to his heart. To the Founder of Christianity self-sacrifice is essential, the life that identifies with its own good humanity's.

Doubtless Lotze was thinking of the universe in this way. In his heart of hearts he admitted the force of the words of the Supreme Man, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." On this view of the universe there could not be a grander or more assuring generalization than that of this thinker. If the universe in its inmost character is just, the inequalities of this life will be rectified in another, when the disciplinary value of them has been utilized. If the universe violates no promise, men will survive death, according to their inspired hope; if it is of sovereign goodness, it will not arrest the moral growth of mankind, will not leave it incomplete and just begun, but will provide a new field and force for its fairer and vaster evolution. If the universe is utterly kind, no human soul can be indifferent to

it, and no human sorrow; nor will the psalmist's prayer be vain, "Put thou my tears in thy bottle." [1] Its feeling for mankind must ever be, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." [2] The Eternal Excellence at the heart of the universe is the Eternal Christ there. The lost world was essential to him. If then the universe be of Christ's excellence and spirit, we need not fear to affirm that the human soul, in its sin, ignorance, aspiration, and struggle, is forever dear and indispensable to it.

A man's argument is often best seen in the light of his life. This reasoner tried to make himself essential to the universe, because he felt that it was in him to become essential to it. He aspired after the excellence and spirit that are not of this world; he set his heart upon the attainment of the richest intellectual culture, the realization of the highest ideals of personal conduct, and the widest discharge of duty to his fellow-men. He had utter respect for truth; he feared falsehood and hated it, and ever sought to be just. He tried, too, to be merciful, and thus patterned his life after the Infinite Life, whose manifestations in nature, in the human mind, and in history were objects of his profound and conscientious study. Infinitely stern, and yet infinitely kind, — such to Lotze was the universe with which he was in reverent and endless fellowship.

[1] Psalm lvi. 8. [2] Matt. x. 30.

James Frederick Ferrier, whose life lies between the years 1808 and 1864, and who was for many years a professor in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, must next receive our attention. Ferrier is in every way an engaging man. His type in physical things is the athlete. He was afraid of no problem, and would own defeat at the hands of no man and no subject. He was among the earliest in our century to reproduce in Great Britain the nobler idealism of Germany, and his reproduction is equal to original work, so thorough is his thinking, so penetrated with conviction, so clear, captivating, and valiant.

To Ferrier, death is an absolute inconceivability; it is utterly unthinkable. Death, as annihilation, as entire destruction of conscious being, is to thought an absurdity.[1] The dead are still the objects of thought; nor can they be forced into utter non-existence. However attenuated and ghostly, they always rise as living objects of the mind. Furthermore, one cannot conceive of one's own annihilation. Let a man imagine himself dead: he is the beholder of his lifeless body; he looks upon his own coffin; he is present at his own funeral; he sees his own grave dug, filled in, covered over, and the flowers of love resting upon it. He is thus everywhere the living percipient mind, with his dead self for object. To think death would be death: so Ferrier reasons, and

[1] See *Essay on Berkeley*, vol. iii. p. 312.

reasons with a world of conviction and positive strength.

To do justice to his argument, we must bear in mind Descartes's analysis. In his quest for certainty, nowhere could the French philosopher find reality except in thought. To him thinking and being were one and the same. "I think; that is to say, I am." That maxim is fundamental in all subsequent philosophy worthy of the name. If, then, thinking is being, the thought of death is still thought, and is therefore a new affirmation of existence. Death as the cessation of thought is unthinkable, utterly outside and beyond the power of reason. To men in this mode of existence, living by the power of reason, surely that which is absolutely inconceivable cannot be taken as the truth, that which is wholly unthinkable cannot be assumed to be the real.

This argument of Ferrier is a particular application of a maxim held to be of universal validity by a large body of philosophic thinkers. The maxim is that necessary thinking, that is thinking which is logically inevitable, is the image of reality; that when one has rendered his conceptions into clearness and coherence one must believe that God's order corresponds to them. Whatever is necessary to purified and reasoned thought must exist: upon that fundamental maxim the thinkers of which I speak build. No stronger foundation can be laid, and no man can tear it up without

making scientific knowledge impossible. Thinking and being are one and the same fact. Death is but a shadow, an obscuration, but not the destruction of the soul.

Wordsworth's familiar poem "We are Seven" is a simple but faithful picture of the natural inconceivability of death. Later, we come, as Ferrier says, "to think that we think death," but we never really do. We cannot, and so the poem of childhood is the faithful utterance of a sovereign law of human thought.

"A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels it's life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

. . . . . .

"'The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.'

. . . . . .

"'And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.'

"'How many are you, then,' said I,
'If they two are in heaven?'
Quick was the little maid's reply,
'O master! we are seven.'

"'But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!'
'T was throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will.
And said, 'Nay, we are seven!'"

When humanity rises into the consciousness of oneness, and human brotherhood is universally realized, the same sovereign law of mind that dominated the sweet child as she thought of the living and the dead will rule every man, and make him claim with a beautiful and invincible persistence even the least of mankind as heirs of the endless life.

Like the true and brave man that he was, Ferrier was full of his own thought when death came. Hunger seemed to him the great weaver in moral things as in physical. The hunger that is in the new-born child sits weaving the whole bodily frame, bones and sinews. And so in moral and spiritual things, it is hunger builds up the being.[1] Death came while his hunger for truth and beauty and right was weaving his intrepid soul into fairer and vaster proportions.

Emmanuel Kant, who was born in 1724, and who died in 1804, is the next great contributor to our theme. His argument is moral, and has been generally considered of great weight and force. Duty is with Kant the sublimest fact in the consciousness of man. Confused and unimpassioned writer as he is, when he speaks of moral obligation his words become impressive and grand. The link between the life of man and the nature of God is found here. "Duty! thou sublime

[1] See Introductory Notice, *Professor Ferrier's Works*, vol. i. p. 33.

and mighty name, that dost embrace nothing charming or insinuating, but requirest submission, and yet seekest not to move the will by threatening aught that would arouse natural aversion or terror, but merely holdest forth a law, which of itself finds entrance into the mind and gains reluctant reverence, . . . a law before which all inclinations are dumb, . . . what origin is there worthy of thee?"[1] In duty Kant finds the divine origin of life and the pledge of its immortality.

Of the moral personality duty exacts perfection; but perfection is impossible, except as a progress toward a goal infinitely distant. Therefore, in order that man may become what the Highest requires him to become, in order that he may realize in himself the perfection for which he was made, an endless future must be his. We are commanded to be holy, just, and good; we are so commanded by the Highest, and the Highest will provide the means of obedience, will grant to man, as the field of his exertion, the life everlasting.

That is Kant's great postulate of the moral life. His thought of the requirement of moral law upon men was of a categorical imperative. Men must be holy, and just, and good. There is this august demand put forth upon them out of the supersensible world. That demand is the

[1] *Theory of Ethics*, p. 256.

most reasonable thing in man's life, the most authoritative, the most sublime. It must be confessed and revered, and if man would have any worth it must be obeyed; but inasmuch as it asks for a form of being unattainable in time, it bids him claim the eternal world as his home, and lifts him into the assurance of immortality. This is Kant's great argument, — an argument dependent indeed for its power upon the developed conscience of those to whom it is addressed, but of overwhelming force and grandeur where men entertain Kant's idea of duty; where they bow in reverence, as he did, before the supersensible world that duty reveals. There is not the least doubt that Kant's heart was filled and swayed by his great thought. In illustration of this a passage must be quoted that has become, as it eminently deserves, classic: "Two things there are which, the oftener and the more steadfastly we consider them, fill the mind with an ever new and ever rising admiration and reverence: the starry heaven *above*, the moral law *within*. Both I contemplate lying clear before me, and connect both immediately with the consciousness of my own existence. The one begins from the place I occupy in the outer world of sense; expands beyond the bounds of imagination the connection of my body with it into a union with worlds rising beyond worlds, and systems blending into systems; and protends it also into the illimitable

times of their periodic movement, their commencement and duration. The other begins with my invisible self, with my personality, and represents me in a world truly infinite, indeed, but whose infinity can be tracked out only by the intellect, and my connection with which . . . I am compelled to recognize as universal and necessary. In the former, the first view of a countless multitude of worlds *annihilates*, as it were, *my importance as an animal creation.* The other, on the contrary, immeasurably *elevates my worth as an intelligence;* and this through my personality, in which the moral law reveals to me a life independent of the animal kingdom, . . . which is not restricted by the conditions and limits of this life, but stretches out to eternity." We are here reminded of one of the greatest of the Psalms: —

> "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
> The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
> What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
> And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
> For thou hast made him but little lower than God,
> And crownest him with glory and honour." [1]

Thus reasoner and seer, philosopher and psalmist, are at one.

It may be well to construe Kant's argument in a style more familiar, to re-think his thought in terms that touch more intimately our human sympathies. Life has both substance and form,

[1] Psalm viii. 3–5.

and it is unexhausted by its expression, as the tree remains unexhausted when a hundred summers have come and gone. If intellect should ever really exhaust itself, how melancholy it would be! My conviction is, however, that in this life intellect is always unexhausted. Bushnell's mind teems with new thoughts to the last; and he carried with him infinitely more and better thoughts than he left behind, noble as these are. Bushnell is simply the eminent example of a law. The ordinary intellect thoroughly excited has its hosts of ideas, and there are moods, familiar to all, when thoughts rise in such numbers that words and strength utterly fail. Every man has his unspeakable intellectual gift.

It would be mournful indeed if the consciousness of right should exhaust itself in conduct. After all that a righteous man can do, he feels within him a power that would be satisfied only with the moral adjustment of the world, with nothing less than the restored order of the moral universe. How grand is Luther's hunger for reformation! And great was the reformation accomplished by him and in his time, yet how utterly incommensurate with his desire! At death his reforming conscience was sublimely unappeased. It is so with every reforming spirit; it has work on hand for all eternity.

It would be too sorrowful to think of, if love should exhaust itself in utterance. But in the

supreme relations of life the love of soul to soul gains by utterance, and is strongest after the completest. All these forms of love pass away like the bloom of the summers that are gone, — the sweet courtesies, the tender solicitudes, the sacred endearments, the daily ministries, the splendid fidelities, of home; but the soul of love abides. That has in its heart a reserve of affection, of fidelity, of sacrifice, utterly boundless. Carlyle closes his note-book on the revered and beloved dead with the remark that worlds yet remain unwritten. It is ever so where the heart is full. This whole beautiful and pathetic life of man is an utterance; it is like the rich and fleeting foliage of the season; it must pass away, but the soul whose utterance it is abides and shall abide. Here in the unexhausted power of life, working under the impulse toward perfection, is the great prophecy of immortality. The tree, overtaken by winter, awaits another season, another summer, another service. The soul in death has, for the time, done its work; it has said all that can now be said, and done all that can now be done. Its summer is gone, winter is upon it; but, although stripped bare, it continues to stand fast. It awaits another season, and looks forward to another opportunity. The substance of thought and love and power remains; there is still a boundless reserve of noble capacity, of possible service. In God's good time and in his new world, the

unexhausted soul will cover itself with fresh and immortal bloom.

A human interest is lent to Kant's reasoning by his bearing as death drew near. This memorable utterance of his is recorded: "I do not fear to die. I assure you, as in the presence of God, that if on this very night, suddenly, the summons to death were to reach me, I should bear it with calmness; I should raise my hands to heaven and say, 'Blessed be God.'" [1]

Another mighty name connected with the rational defense of immortality is that of Bishop Butler, who was born in 1692, and died in 1752.

That we shall survive the change of death, and live under a new form of being and in a new sphere Butler thinks in accordance with the course of nature. The difference between human life before birth and after it, in infancy and maturity, shows that the same living soul exists under forms of widest contrast. The same law holds true among the lower orders of life. Consider the wonderful transformations of life going on before us: the worm that becomes the butterfly, the creeping thing that becomes the winged. Here you have a new set of powers and a new environment, the same life under a new form and under new conditions. Consider the life in the egg while brooded, and the same life after the egg is hatched; think of the eagle in the shell, and the

[1] *Life of Kant:* prefixed to *Theory of Ethics.*

eagle in the air. The life is one and continuous; yet how unlike the forms under which it appears, and how contrasted the environment whose limits are the shell and that whose bounds are the shifting horizon and the receding skies! Modern science lends new emphasis to this part of Butler's argument. All life, according to evolution, has come from one original, simple form. It is the same life, assuming in this epoch one form, in that another, differentiating itself as the ages run, but never losing its original character, never becoming other than life. The transformations which appeared to Butler to be the law of nature, the science of our time claims to have shown to be that law. Butler's modest but manly conclusion rests upon a vaster and solider premise; that the soul shall exist hereafter in a new form and in a new environment is but according to the analogy of nature. From this law of the persistence of life in new forms and under new conditions, Butler asserts that it is natural to expect the persistence of the living soul beyond death.

The next step in his argument rests upon a fundamental maxim of thought. Whatever exists now has in its favor a presumption of everlasting existence, unless it can be shown that there is something fatal in the way of that existence. Unless it can be shown that death is the destruction of the living soul, the fact that the soul lives now constitutes a probability, abundantly suffi-

cient to act upon, that it will live forever. We expect the course of nature to remain uniform. We expect sunrise and sunset, the succession of the seasons, seedtime and harvest, the phases of the moon and the movement of the tides to be in the future as they have been in the past. The fact that this is their order establishes a probability that it will continue to be their order, unless indeed we can show cause to the contrary. So with the soul. *Continuance* in being now justifies the expectation of everlasting life, unless death be the destruction of the soul. We can show that death is such a destroyer only in two ways: either from the reason of the thing, or from the analogy of nature. But inasmuch as we do not know what death is we cannot infer that it destroys the living soul, and inasmuch as we cannot follow animals beyond death we cannot argue from analogy that death annihilates living powers. The fear that death will end all is born, not of reason, but of imagination. To deliver men from this fear Butler continues his argument under three specifications.

First, if the soul is mortal, it must be compound; but it is not. It is one and indivisible; and death, as dissolution of parts, is meaningless when applied to the soul.

In the second place, our bodies are not we; their destruction is therefore not our destruction. "We have already several times over lost a great

part, or perhaps the whole of our body, according to certain common established laws of nature, yet we remain the same living agents; when we shall lose as great a part, or the whole, by another common established law of nature, death, why may we not also remain the same?" [1]

Thirdly, our powers of reflection are in a manner independent of sensation. The loss of sight and hearing cuts one off from the world of vision and sound, but does not interrupt thought. Death destroys the power of sensation, but there is no evidence whatever that it destroys the power of thought. There is no reason to believe that death acts in any other way than a sleep or a swoon. In fine, there is no reason to believe that death destroys living agents; no reason to believe that it destroys their present powers of reflection; no reason to believe that it is a discontinuance of the exercise of our present intellectual and spiritual powers. If it be said that there is no God, and therefore men are mortal, Butler replies that that is bad logic; for if we have lived once without a God, we may live again without him.

Butler's argument is positive and negative. It rests, in so far as it is positive, upon the sense of continuance in the mind, upon the feeling of permanence in consciousness, upon the unity and identity of the soul through all time and change. This makes it probable that life continues through

[1] *Analogy*, p. 21.

death and beyond it. "That which is must be assumed to go on, unless you can bring decisive proof that it is interrupted." [1]

Here we reach the negative part of Butler's argument, and it is absolutely conclusive. He makes it abundantly evident that we know nothing about the nature of death, or of the effect of death upon life in general, to justify the affirmation that it means the destruction of the soul.

This great thinker does not claim to demonstrate immortality, but to show a probability in favor of that belief, of sufficient strength that wise men will shape their life in supreme reference to its issues. Butler never appears with a flourish of trumpets, never upon any great theme promises absolute clearness and certainty. He makes humble pledges, but he redeems them. No more sober or solid piece of reasoning was ever built in favor of faith in the future life than that raised by his great mind. Very calm and grand are these reasonings of Butler; they fulfill his modest promise, and more; they bid us trust the living, self-identical soul. With conclusive logic, they bid us distrust the imaginations that connect with the mysterious change the annihilation of being.

Butler's end shows how real and solemn to him were the truths upon which he had spent the

[1] F. D. Maurice, *Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 3.

force of his extraordinary intellect. In his final moments he "expressed it as an awful thing to appear before the Moral Governor of the world." His whole life had been dominated by the thought of the Eternal Presence, by the consciousness of the Supreme Righteousness, by the conviction of the Divine Order; and now that he is about to leave the world, the same thought, consciousness, and conviction dominate him still. God and man were beings in indestructible relations and in immortal reckoning.

After Butler had spoken of his awe at appearing before the Righteous One, his chaplain, in those last moments, repeated the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Ah, this is comfortable," he said; and with this utterance upon his tongue he entered the life eternal.[1] Such a scene, so raised above animal fears and pains, so full of awe and trust, so utterly sure of God and the soul's undying relation to Him, so sublimely aware of the momentousness of the mysterious change, serves to render even more impressive and powerful the results of Butler's thought upon the life everlasting.

We come now to Bishop Berkeley, the most fascinating and inspiring of all philosophers since Plato, — one whose mind was as great as it was beautiful, whose intelligence and character were

[1] Lightfoot, *Leaders of the Northern Church*, pp. 161, 170.

indeed a spiritual splendor. He was born in 1685, and died in 1753. His life therefore began seven years earlier, and lasted one year longer, than Butler's. This great and beautiful spirit confronted the problems of his age, the problems of humanity, with a consciousness of insight and power that is still exhilarating. He put a meaning upon the external world that later thinkers have enlarged, but that no one has changed. Berkeley's great question lies here: What does the external world mean? That there is a world beyond us we do not doubt; certainly Berkeley never did. He simply wants to know its meaning. He sees no sense in believing that dead matter can have access to or impress a living mind. If there is to be communion between nature and man, there must be some kinship between them. What does the world of color mean, — the beauty of the morning, the glory of evening, the blue of the sky and sea, the hues of the flower below and the rainbow above? What does the world of sound import, — the rush of the tempest, the roll of the thunder, the song of the brook and the bird, and the voice of man? What do the worlds of touch and taste and smell signify? Vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell tell me of a world beyond me, a world that gives me sensational life, that imparts it in ways that are fixed and orderly. And since I know of no power other than spiritual, it is the Infinite Spirit

who, according to his own plan, makes this ceaseless and enriching address through sense to my mind. The world means nothing more than sensations given according to invariable laws, under fixed conditions, and by the immediate volition of God, to the percipient and rational spirit of man. Sensational life is in its nature perishable, and were it not perpetually renewed, it would exist only as a reminiscence. The world of possible sensation is kept in existence by the never-ceasing exertion of Almighty God. On the other hand, spirit is active, unchanging, permanent; decay, variation, dissolution, is utterly foreign to its nature. The soul is a simple, uncompounded substance, and is therefore naturally immortal.

Berkeley's argument is thus the result of his analysis of the world. In the supreme fact of knowledge two things are to be noted, the mind that knows and the object known. Berkeley has told us what he understands by the object known: that it is the world of possible sensation; that it is a perishable world, forever renewed in the mind of mankind by the Infinite Spirit. The knowing mind presents here an absolute contrast to the thing known. It is as the active to the passive, the permanent to the fleeting, the immortal to the perishable. Here indeed the active principle that I call my soul is joined to the passive principle that I call my body. Death is but the separation of this active and passive, this

non-mortal and perishable. In another world God will give the soul a body as it shall please Him, and reach its thought by other forms of the Divine address, and by other laws of his self-revealing life. Berkeley's argument is good to the extent that there is in death no hint of the decay of spirit. We have upon this ground of the undecaying soul a vast hope, and we know of nothing to contradict it.

Berkeley's philosophy is very beautiful, and there was never a man more completely identified with his thought. The outward order was to him the ceaseless speech of God to his heart; and the order into which he was led by his non-sensuous spirit was indubitably real and ever present. Truth was sublime, and it was accessible far into the heart of it. In that high confidence and spiritual passion Berkeley lived and died. To his masterful intellect atheism was a wretched absurdity, and the notion of the mortality of the soul one of brutal stupidity. His life kept its fine enthusiasm to the last, tempered and ennobled by a deepening sense of the awful beauty of God. Gracious in youth, a knight in self-sacrifice through his years of strength, kingly in the repose of spirit that characterized his last days, his death was but the coronation of his life. On the evening of Sunday, the 14th of January, 1753, Berkeley was resting on a couch in his own house on Holywell Street, Oxford, surrounded by his

family. His wife had been reading from the burial service in the Prayer Book part of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians, and he had been making remarks upon that great chapter. Soon after, his daughter went to offer him a cup of tea, and, as his biographer remarks, "she found him as it seemed asleep, but his body was already cold; for it was the last sleep, the mystery of death; and the world of the senses had suddenly ceased to be a medium of intercourse between his spirit and those who remained."[1] Death was but the language of sense now in disuse, and this strong and beautiful soul literally had his conversation in heaven through some form of address still more refined, adequate, and wonderful.

Origen, perhaps the greatest intellect in the Christian church after the apostle Paul, should at least be mentioned in connection with our subject. He stood for natural as opposed to conditional immortality. Besides, he elaborated an interpretation of man's life which, if it has been rejected by the church in general, and scorned by the long line of orthodox theologians, is yet, for reach of intellect, for breadth of view, for grandeur and sweep of thought, the admiration and amazement of all scholars. So recent and competent a judge as the late Dr. Edwin Hatch regards Origen's interpretation of man's life as

[1] Fraser's *Berkeley*.

unsurpassed for logical coherence in the whole history of Christian thinking.

According to Origen, death has no power over the soul. It existed before time in the invisible and intellectual world; it is of the same order as the heavenly spirits, and is kindred in essence to God. Freedom is its grand characteristic, involving the possibility of alienation from God. In the intellectual world, before the creation of this material order, a host of spirits turned away from the eternal good. They cannot die, and must not remain in utter and everlasting loss. They must be redeemed through suffering. Thus the material order is brought into being, and the unfaithful souls are sent into time, invested with bodies, assigned their places in life according to the demands of their divine discipline.

This life, and part of the future if need be, is a prison house, an expiation. By all these plagues of time God would purify and bring back his immortal children; by this discipline, severe but kind, God will finally overcome the evil will, and lead on up through an infinite stairway of worlds all lost spirits into complete holiness and blessedness, through communion with himself now become fixed and immutable. Origen's idea of the soul reaches back into the past eternity, and on into the endless future. It begins with all spirits in happy communion with God; but that communion in which God is all

and in all is broken through disloyalty before time began. Now comes the creation of this sensuous world, and the advent of man upon this earth, and his education through experience. This education goes on from world to world, in an ascending series; but at the far-off end the broken communion is restored, the fallen spirits are redeemed, the self-alienated souls brought back with all their sin and suffering, shaped into new wealth and joy, into a communion with God that can no more be broken, and in which, forever and unchangeably, God shall be all and in all.

This scheme has never been adopted as a whole. But standing in the presence of the mystery of life, feeling the certainty of God's existence, and the unfathomed reach and significance of the human spirit, the vast coherent scheme of this philosophical theologian becomes impressive indeed, and assumes a grandeur that forbids us to treat it lightly. It seems to most men a fairy tale to assert the preëxistence of souls. One passage still survives from the loss of the bulk of Origen's works in which he hints at the proof of this dream. All knowledge is but recognition; the classifications of things, of flowers and hills and trees and streams, of beast and bird and man, are made according to the types of these things which are eternal in the heavens, and which men beheld in their preëxistent state. That answer may not have literal truth, but it does give the substance

of things. Origen's scheme asserts the reality of the intellectual world, declares man's essential kinship with it, pronounces this "muddy vesture of decay" to be but an incident in the history of the soul, and relegates the sensuous order to its due insignificance. Few in our day will be concerned with the literal statements, but there are many who still behold in the scheme of the great Alexandrian the truth about man in a sublime parable, and who recognize beneath the forms of his speech a depth of insight and a breadth of philosophic vision unsurpassed in the thinking of mankind. When we remember that the man from whose brain it came gave his life from the age of eighteen until his death at seventy in serene self-denial, in herculean labors and adamantine loyalty to the cause of humanity, that he was a man who asserted by sweetness and undaunted courage in the midst of false accusations of brethren, and heathen persecutions, and on the horrible rack that ended his splendid career, the ascendency of soul, and proved himself a spirit wearing the nature of God, we are the more ready to consider with sympathy and discernment the scheme by which this great thinker places upon human existence an interpretation so sublime.

In ascending from Origen to Plato — the last and, all things considered, the greatest of the philosophic minds that have considered the question of life beyond death — we are but going from

the disciple to the master. Plato is properly the first; but inasmuch as he still remains the richest and most resourceful of all who have sought to give rational vindication to the belief in a future life, it seems but right to reserve him as the natural close and climax of this chapter.

Plato's discussion in the "Phædo" is much more than a set of arguments in favor of immortality. That dialogue is a consummate work of art; it is a drama, in which Plato's dying master is the chief actor. The arguments are those of Plato, and not of Socrates; still, it adds immeasurably to the charm and significance of the great discussion that the actor in the tragedy is also the chief speaker, that the one about to die is the vindicator of the deathless life.

During the considerable time that elapses between the sentence of Socrates to death and the execution, his friends and pupils gather every day for discussion upon the old themes of thought. The last day of life has come, and that morning the friends gather at the prison at sunrise. Before sunset Socrates will have gone. There is about the doomed philosopher an air of deep composure. He is facing death in cheerfulness and confident faith, and his mood is to his friends an utter mystery. They cannot understand how he does not fear to die; they ask him to explain the ground of his courage. "Did I not think," he answers, "that I should go to dwell in the com-

pany not only of gods wise and good, but next also men that have died better than those here on earth, I should be wrong in not feeling sorry at my approaching death. But, as it is, be assured that I trust to join the society not only of good men, but that I shall go to abide with God." "Socrates," said one of his friends, "surely you do not mean to depart and keep this belief to yourself, without letting us share it with you?"[1] Thus it happens that the day between sunrise and sunset, the long and lovely Greek day, the last of Socrates in the prison, the last of the thinker with his friends, is spent in giving his reasons for the faith that is in him.

A fit atmosphere is needed for everything. The most wonderful changes may occur among the heavenly bodies, — conjunctions of planets, eclipses of the moon, the transit of glorious worlds across the disk of the sun; and if the atmosphere is wrought into cloud and tempest these sublime events are hid from human sight. Certain conditions are everywhere essential. A man cannot think at his best in the roar and push of the street. A profane man cannot blaspheme in the presence of the friend whose character he reveres. Balaam cannot curse what God has blessed. If he is to invoke evil, he must exclude from his vision Israel's goodly tents. Plato understands this as few have ever done. He knows

[1] *Phædo*, E. M. Cope's translation, p. 11.

that there is a fitting mood for the consideration of immortality; a mood of insight and rational power for the speaker, and one of appreciation and sympathy for the hearer. And so he takes the greatest man in all Greek history, in his high demeanor under an unjust sentence, in his pious confidence face to face with death, surrounded by the admiring love and tender devotion of his disciples, and makes him, in those pathetic and beautiful hours in the Athenian prison between the final morning and evening, the spokesman of his own profound faith concerning the soul.

There is among the friends and interlocutors of Socrates the fear lest the soul perish on the very day of a man's death; the fear lest, on quitting the body, the soul be dispersed and vanish, like breath or smoke, and be nowhere any more. Is the soul dispersed at death, and does it perish then?

Socrates answers first with an argument from opposites. The state of sleep results in its opposite, the state of being awake; and the state of being awake results in its opposite, the state of being asleep. There is this circle in all living things. Death and life are opposites, different states of the same being. Life passes into death as the waking being passes into the sleeping, and death passes into life as the sleeping being passes into the waking. There is a fountain of Being out of which the living come, and into which the dead return. Birth and death are simply the way

out from and the way back into the Eternal Life. Plato's first argument does not meet the question of the persistence of the individual consciousness. Perhaps it was meant as a general idea and background for the arguments that were to follow. The argument closes with this fine passage: "If there were such a thing as going to sleep without any corresponding waking again generated from that which is asleep, you know that universal nature would make the famous Endymion a mere farce, and he would be quite eclipsed, because everything else would be in the same state as himself, asleep. And so also in the same way, my dear Cebes, if everything were to die which is endowed with life, and after their death the dead things were to remain in this shape and never come back to life, is n't it absolutely necessary that everything should be at last dead, and nothing alive? What remedy could possibly be found to prevent everything being swallowed up in death?" [1]

The second argument is from the theory of knowledge. On the theory of knowledge the deepest minds of the world have been exercised. One class of thinkers say that knowledge consists wholly of sensation; eyes and ears, and hands and the other senses, and a brain account for the ordered and imposing structure of human

[1] *Phædo*, E. M. Cope's translation, p. 29. All the quotations, with an occasional variation, are from this wonderful work.

science. These men say, "There is nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses." To this, and in behalf of another class of thinkers, Leibnitz replies, "Nothing except the intellect itself." Kant took up the problem here, and beyond him and his immediate successors the world has not yet gone, and it is not likely to go. The mind has an outfit of powers, of intellectual laws and conditions, in common phrase a soul, antecedent to the play of sensation, whose slumber is broken by the appeal of sense, whose waking state of wide-eyed wonder is induced by the stimulus of outward things, but without whose ordering spirit and understanding heart there could not be such a thing as human knowledge. So much philosophy may be said to have proved. That position vindicates the essential claim of the Greek thinker. His peculiar theory goes further. He contends that knowledge is recognition. When you see the portrait of your friend you recall the friend himself, because you have known him in other days, and because the copy carries your mind back to the reality. Similarly, Plato reasons, beautiful things and just and good and true carry the mind back to the absolute beauty, justice, goodness, and truth. We recognize these copies, we know them because we are able to refer them to the realities in a higher world. But how came we to know those eternal forms according to which we classify the things

of sense? We must have beheld them before birth in the supersensible world; we must have brought the knowledge of them with us. When we wake in sense and time, it is to see before us the copies of the realities in the invisible world; to be reminded through what appears of what is, and of our high relationship to that divine realm. A gallery hung with portraits of Mr. Gladstone's contemporaries would serve, on his walking through it, to call up before his mind all the distinguished men whom he has met, with some of whom he has labored, many of whom he has forgotten. This world, according to Plato, is such a gallery. It is hung with the likenesses of the ideal world, decorated with the images of the immortal realities, and when the soul passes through it, it is reminded of the invisible world of beauty and truth and goodness from which it came forth. The argument is, since all knowledge is recognition, the soul must have existed before birth. If it was with God before birth, why may it not return to God after death?

The argument may not establish all that Plato thought it did. Still, it vindicates the non-sensuous character of the soul, its origin in the spiritual sphere, its kinship to the Mind that orders and knows the universe.

The interlocutors still appear to Socrates unsatisfied. They seem still haunted with the childish apprehension that the wind will literally blow

the soul to pieces and disperse it as it issues from the body, especially when it happens that a man dies not in a calm but in a high wind.[1] Thus the transition is made to the third argument.

That argument is from the nature of the soul. Things are divisible into compound and simple, visible and invisible, ever changing and never changing. The body is compound, visible, ever changing; the soul is simple, invisible, never changing. But here two objections come in. The soul is to the body as the harmony to the lyre. The harmony is beautiful, incorporeal, invisible, divine; yet how foolish it would be, for all that, to argue that it will survive the broken lyre! Break the lyre, and you end the tune. Kill the body, and you destroy the soul. Socrates welcomes the objection with a smile, but before he replies calls for the second objection. This is that the soul may outlive many bodies, and yet not be immortal. The weaver is more durable than the cloak that he produced for his own wearing; but you cannot infer from the existence of the cloak after the old weaver is dead that his soul still exists, because a man is more durable than a cloak. He is indeed more durable than one cloak, but not more durable than many. The old weaver outlasted many cloaks, but the cloak in which he died outlasted him. The soul is more durable than one body, but not more durable perhaps than several. Some future

[1] *Phædo*, p. 39.

body may survive the destruction of this soul, as the last cloak that he wore survived the weaver's death. These two objections, that of the harmony and the lyre, and that of the weaver and his cloak, are the occasion of the fourth and fifth arguments.

The fourth argument is psychological, and contends that the soul cannot be to the body as the harmony to the lyre. We have seen that the soul is anterior to the body, whereas the harmony is subsequent to the lyre. Then, too, harmony is an effect, whereas soul is a cause. There is all the contrast between soul and harmony that there is between an active being and a passive, between a mover and doer and the thing moved and done. Besides, more and less apply to harmony, but not to soul. Partly a soul and partly not a soul is nonsense; but partly a harmony and partly a discord is thoroughly applicable to a strain of music. If you say that a harmony is not a harmony while discords mar it, and contend that the soul is like a pure harmony, in this case, also, the comparison fails. For then there would be in human life no such thing as vice, or evil, or wrong, or suffering. All that is absurd. The soul is master; the harmony is servant. The soul is in command of the body and fights it. It subjects the body to discipline, and in this way, by its office and right as commander, shows the fancifulness of the objection from the comparison of the lyre and the strain of music.

The soul is anterior, causal, sovereign, akin to God. Thus the first objection is disposed of, an objection revived in modern popular philosophy, but which never would have been revived had the revivers taken the trouble to read Plato's exposure of its fancifulness and absurdity.

The second objection does not concern us here. It opens the way for Plato's fifth and final argument, the ideal. This argument is so bound up with his peculiar philosophy that it could not be stated intelligibly without large digression. His aim in the ideal argument is to establish the inherent vitality of the soul, its absolute indestructibleness through participation in the eternal life.

These, then, are Plato's arguments as given in his great dialogue on the soul.[1] Birth and death are but gateways for the same life, out from and back to the fountain of Being. Our powers of intellect, our faculties for ordering and knowing the world, proclaim the divine origin and anterior existence of the soul. The nature of the soul as simple and incorruptible is a witness to its permanence. The relation in which it stands to the body — that of a master to a slave — attests its

[1] For the argument from "self-moving" as characteristic of the soul see *Phædrus*, 245 C. For another original and subtle argument see *Pol.* x. 610 D. The soul and body have their evils. The evils of the body attack and destroy it; the evils of the soul, the vices, attack but cannot destroy it. Thus the soul, surviving all its own peculiar perils, will much more survive the diseases of the body and live forever.

kinship to God, the sovereign of the world. Finally, through participation in the eternal idea of life, the soul is inherently vital and absolutely indestructible.

Plato's thoughts are greater than his arguments, wonderful as these are. Whence came these thoughts? When we bear in mind that Plato's reasonings are in vindication of a belief all but universal, rooted deep in the heart of man, the workings of this great intellect appear all the more significant and impressive. True, Plato did not compass a complete demonstration. There is evidence all through his discussion that he did not expect to do so. Still, there is in him an invincible sense that in dealing with the past and future of the soul he is dealing with reality.[1] As one reads his pages, the conviction is inevitable that Plato's thoughts are the reflections of the everlasting truth; that they are, in the language of Christians, the inspiration of the spirit of truth.

Greater than all the formal arguments in the

[1] "But this much we can see: that in Plato's view man's life is rooted in the universal and the divine; that the eternal and the infinite is, so to speak, the presupposition of all his conscious existence; and that to awaken him to the 'reminiscence' of this primal fact, or, in other words, to bring it into clear consciousness as the first principle of all his thought and being, is the great aim of all intellectual culture. The highest object which man can propose to himself in this world is, therefore, to find his way back to the original spiritual unity from which he springs." — Professor E. Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*, vol. ii. pp. 181, 182.

"Phædo" is what may be called the personal argument, the impression made by the character of Socrates. He has had, all through his life, a sense of a divine call similar to that of the Hebrew prophets. With a conscientiousness and a piety none the less intense and sincere because combined with humor the most delicate and delicious, with irony the most subtle and terrible, with the keenest susceptibility to everything human, and with a richness and depth of intellectual interest almost unexampled, Socrates followed for more than seventy years his divine call. God has been his Master, and he has not labored in vain. His years of high faith and fidelity have issued in composure of spirit, in colossal strength of character, in prophetic insight. This serenity of Socrates, this majesty of character, this access through prophetic insight to a higher wisdom and a diviner outlook, constitutes the most convincing evidence of the endless life. The chain is loosed from his leg. It had been in pain, but now, through release from the iron that pressed it, as he rubs it pleasure comes. That interprets to him the order of the world: pleasure out of pain, gain through loss, life after death. He vindicates his cheerfulness in the face of death with a reference to the myth of the dying swan. His friends must not hold him inferior in foresight to the swans, "which, as soon as they feel that they must die, sing then louder and

better than they have ever sung in all their past lives, for joy that they are about to depart into the presence of God whose servants they are."[1] Socrates believes that he is a fellow-slave of the swans, that he is consecrated to the service of the same God, that he has received from his Master the gift of foresight in no inferior manner to them, and that he is ready to sing as they do at the thought of departing from life. Life is sacred to God; it is divine in origin, in progress, and in destiny. But the sun is already upon the hills, and the hour has come for Socrates to die. With fine self-reliance he goes to the bath and prepares himself for death. He receives his wife and children, bids them adieu, and gives his parting injunctions in behalf of them to Crito, his friend. He is asked about his burial, and his answer is characteristic. If they can catch him, they may bury him anyhow they please; but he shall be gone beyond their reach; him they cannot take or bury. The attendant comes in with the fatal cup. Socrates asks if he may pour part of it as a libation, and the reply is that there is not enough for that. "At any rate," Socrates continues, "I may, and indeed must, pray to God that my change of abode from this world to the other may turn out prosperous: which indeed I do pray. Amen." Phædo, the beloved disciple, adds: "And just as he finished these words he

[1] *Phædo*, p. 53.

put the cup to his lips, and with the utmost serenity and cheerfulness drank it off. And most of us up to this time had been tolerably successful in controlling our tears; but when we saw him drinking and the cup actually finished, it was all over, but in spite of myself my tears began to flow in torrents, so that I was obliged to cover my face and weep for myself, — for assuredly it was not for him, but for my own fate in being deprived of such a friend." Socrates exclaims to his weeping friends, "What conduct is this!" "I have heard that one should die in peace." After this he walked about for some time, and then when his legs began to feel heavy lay down on his back. "Well, the cold was already beginning to affect the region below the heart, when he uncovered his face — for it had been covered — and said, which were indeed the last words he spoke, — Crito, he said, we owe an offering to the God of Health; pray pay it, and don't forget. Oh, certainly, said Crito, it shall be done: but consider if you have any other injunctions for us. To this question he made no reply this time; but after a short interval he stirred, and the attendant uncovered his face, and his eyes were fixed: upon which, Crito, observing it, closed his eyes and his mouth." [1]

If it should be asked why there is appended to the exposition of the argument for the future life, in the case of each one of the thinkers presented

[1] *Phædo*, pp. 107–108.

in this chapter, an account of the manner of his death, or at least a reference to it, the answer is supplied by the method of Plato. What he considered becoming in his great discussion cannot surely be out of place in one incomparably slighter; and should it be said that Plato did so for purely artistic reasons, the sufficient rejoinder will be that with Plato there are no such things. Art is but the image of life, and life is but concrete and vital truth. Between mere speculation and conviction there is a vast difference, the product of the creative imagination and the discovered and abiding order of the world; and in no way could Plato show so powerfully to which class the arguments of the immortal dialogue in his judgment belong as to make them the support of his dying master. It is only upon the flying wheel that one can be completely sure of the real gem, and in no way but in the stress of living and the fiery trial of experience can the truth receive supreme vindication. The historic Socrates standing to the issues of righteousness, and crowning a life of devotion with a manly and heroic death, is for thought supremely logical, and the final term in the vital syllogism but makes definite and real the preceding process. In Plato's great discussion history becomes the vindication of dialectic, as that has been the discoverer of the order of the world, and the weight of heroic experience and sublime personal bear-

ing is justly added to the power of thought. The final scene in the "Phædo" is, on the part of Socrates, an approach to the sovereign elevation of the ascension. As we uncover the face and look into the fixed eyes, we feel that the master spirit has gone on a new and grander errand; that death is but the release from pain, the sombre healer of all infirmity, the introduction to perennial health, and the gateway into immortal life.

CHAPTER V.

THE APOSTLE PAUL AND IMMORTALITY.

"That ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope." — 1 THESSALONIANS iv. 13.

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." — PHILIPPIANS i. 21.

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection." — PHILIPPIANS iii. 10.

"The time of my departure is come." — 2 TIMOTHY iv. 6.

"For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." — 2 CORINTHIANS v. 1.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words." — 1 THESSALONIANS iv. 18.

CHAPTER V.

THE APOSTLE PAUL AND IMMORTALITY: FAITH AND CHRISTIAN REASON.

PAUL is the only apostle that enters into argument in support of faith in the life beyond death, or that expresses his conviction in terms of Christian reason.

The perpetuity of the new life given the apostles through their Master is the common and unalterable conviction of them all. But Peter and James and John never attempt any rational expression of their conviction. Perhaps there was no call for it in the needs of those to whom they ministered. Perhaps they had no disposition that way, and perhaps no training and no gift. Whatever account may be given of it in the extant writings of the three pillar apostles, rational consideration of belief in the endless life there is none. Paul is the only one of the apostolic band in whose thought faith comes forth as Christian reason.

This is not said in disparagement of the other apostles. They had the conviction, the certitude in moral feeling of the fact, and they expressed that assurance in ways suited to the needs of those whom they addressed. Feeling is more

than reason; conviction is deeper than the logical understanding; the instincts, intuitions, and divinations of the soul are vaster than the capacity of the most powerful intellect. The famous remark of Anselm must ever remain memorable: "Fides præcedit intellectum." Faith, the sense of spiritual reality, the appropriate feeling in its presence, life and the dim consciousness of its divine cause, must ever go before the rational expression of its content. Even this does not state the case as it stands. Faith, moral feeling, the reality and reach of the spiritual life, not only precede; they are ever vaster, diviner, than the workings of the most comprehensive mind. The earth is more than geology, the stellar heaven vaster than astronomy, the material universe infinitely beyond physical science. In the same way, the spiritual life is greater than intellect, Christian experience than Christian science. Follow the trunk of the tree downward, and you come upon its roots. These you can trace from the surface in their several directions. From the spread of the tree above you can guess as to the reach below. Still, knowledge is incomplete. Even if you uncover the roots and dig with the utmost diligence, you find that they stretch away beyond you and are past finding out. You cannot transplant the tree and be sure that you take it all with you. You cannot exhibit it and be sure that you have not left much of its finest life

behind. Thus deep, intricate, wide-spreading, are the roots of the spiritual life, thus incapable of complete exploration and exhibition, thus baffling to the scientific intelligence; subtle, far-reaching, and great is the life of the Christian heart. All the apostles stood in the power of this momentous life. Either from the absence of outward call or from lack of disposition and power, Peter and James and John attempted no rational expression of their faith. They believed that they had not followed cunningly devised fables. They rejoiced in the day-star of conviction in the heart. They rested faith upon the Eternal Life which they had seen and heard and handled, and together looked forward with unclouded hope to the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Paul passed over into Christianity from a prominent Jewish sect. He was a Pharisee. He carried over from the old faith to the new the two ruling ideas of his life, the idea of righteousness and that of immortality. Both these ideas were transformed and fired with a new vitality. Still, their presence in Saul the Pharisee and in Paul the Christian discovers the continuity of his great character. From the beginning the idea of the future life was in his thoughts; through early education it was rooted in his heart. In later years it was the subject of reflection and deliberate faith; it gathered strength when, as a

pupil, he sat at the feet of Gamaliel. During the years of his training in Jerusalem he had doubtless met with members of the skeptical Sadducean sect. Expression of feeling, interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, rational discussion for and against human immortality, was an experience in which Paul had often borne his part in those eager and disputatious days. He, too, had encountered, as Stephen did, Epicureans and stoics who stood opposed to his belief as a Pharisee. Everything goes to show that this must have been the case. Without repeated and strenuous experiment Paul could not have come to a view of the limitations of the human mind so wholesome and wise; nor could he have acquired the fine reserve that is so strong a feature of his great mind; nor, again, could he, without discipline and the conflict of intellect with intellect, have come into that confidence of reason that everywhere distinguishes him. Paul is both mystic and dialectician. He carries in his heart the unsearchable riches of the new life, and at the same time is impelled from within, in response to calls from without, to give the form of reason to his Christian faith.

The fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians contains his great argument for the future life. It consists of three parts: a statement of fact; a comparison of that fact with the Corinthian denial; a line of suggestion from

analogy and from the nature of the case as to the mode of the future or resurrection life.

1. The statement of fact.

Here the apostle reminds the Corinthians of the sum and substance of the glad tidings that he had preached to them. The fact that he had preached, that they had received, and in the strength of which they were now battling for righteousness and escaping from the tyranny of evil was threefold. It was the announcement of the death, the burial, and the revival of Christ. The death was the supreme manifestation of the Divine Love. That was basal. The burial was the supreme manifestation of sympathy, and was next in order. The revival was the supreme manifestation of power, and that was the consummation of the message. If love does not die, it is not sovereign; if it is not buried, it is not absolute in sympathy; if it is not revived, it is not victorious. The love that dies and is buried and is revived is the supreme, the compassionate, and the victorious love of God in Christ. The Divine death for sin is fundamental; but it is not now in requisition for discussion. The Divine burial in attestation of sympathy is not in contention, and so is not further considered. The revival of Christ from death is the crowning fact in his career, in Paul's message, in the apostolic announcement to the world; and in its bearing upon the question of a

revival from death for the human soul it is of the utmost moment. Therefore the evidence in support of it must be cited. No one can read Paul's calm, conscientious, and impressive recital of facts in attestation of the resurrection of Christ without the conviction that this great thinker did most assuredly believe in that sublime event, and that he regarded it as certain as that Augustus had been emperor of Rome, or Pilate governor of Judea.

"The Last Day of the Reign of Terror" is the title of a picture in the famous French palace,[1] and no one who has seen it can ever forget it. Death with the guillotine, in the vision of imagination, stands in the terrible background. The prison is entered by the minister of death, who begins reading his appalling roll-call. The faces of the unfortunate prisoners vary in their particular expression, yet all contribute toward the impression of gloom and despair made by the picture. The faces of some are hidden behind the hands that conceal the flow of heart-breaking tears; others are faintly lighted by a desperate hope; others still are white with dismay, ghastly with horror, or terrible with rage and contempt. Such are the prisoners of despair and such is their appearance, and among them stands the minister of death and his frightful roll-call. In sublime contrast is the roll-call of the apostle, for in his

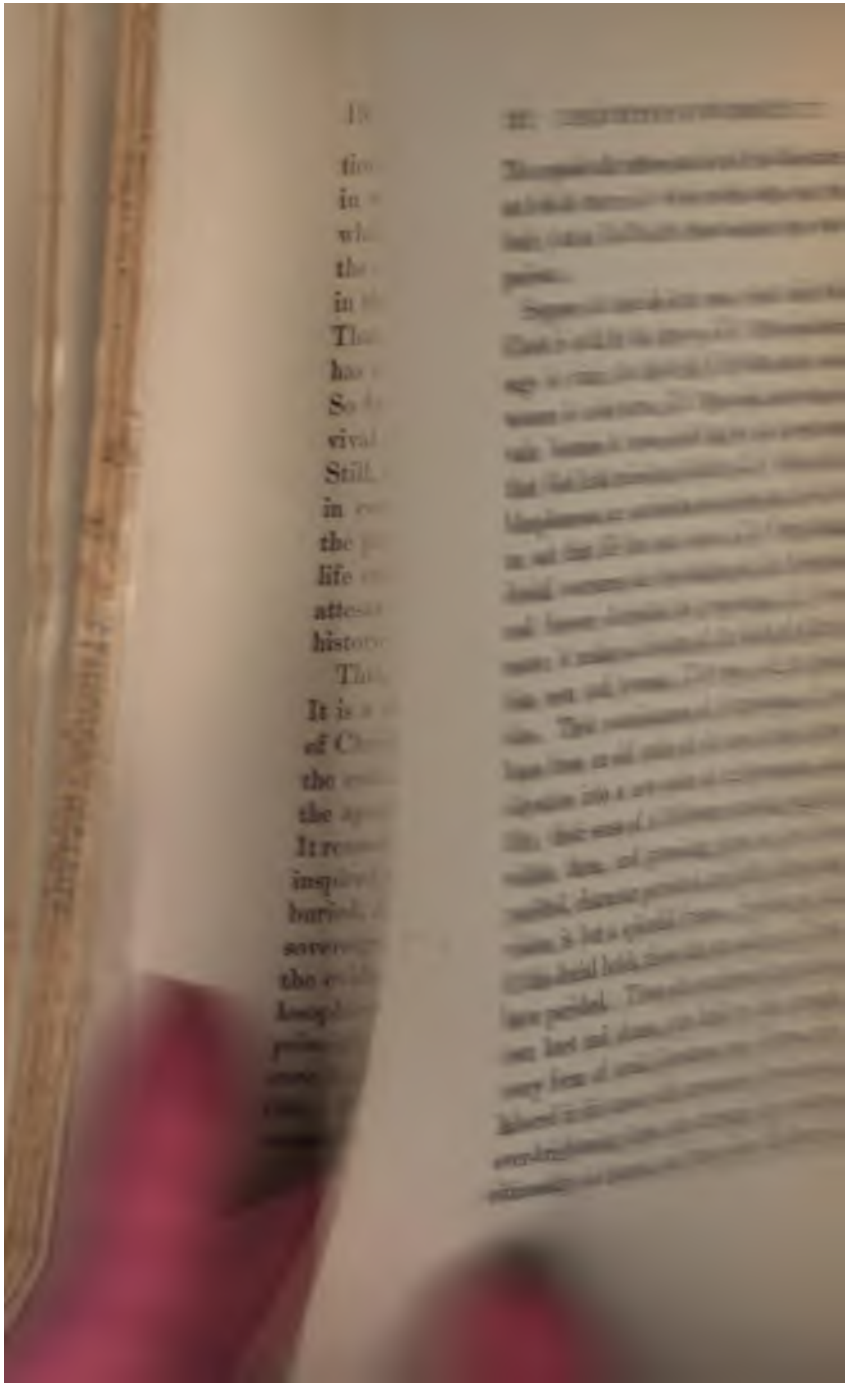
[1] In the palace at Versailles.

picture Eternal Life is the background, and here the prisoners are prisoners of hope. In imagination the apostle beholds assembled humanity: this is the foreground. The faces of this assembly are scarred with sin, worn with toil, lined with struggle, furrowed with sorrow; yet in all there is the solemn joy of a great expectation. To mankind thus gathered in his ample imagination Paul reads his inspiring roll-call.

After his revival from the dead, Christ appeared unto Peter; then to the twelve; afterwards to five hundred brethren at once, of whom the majority were still alive when Paul wrote; subsequently to James; and again to all the apostles. Last of all Christ appeared unto Paul. That is the evidence.

It is a fact that Paul wants to establish, the fact of the revival from death, not of a common or even an uncommon man, but of the person in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; of the being in whom were manifest the eternal sacrifice and the eternal sympathy. The revival was in attestation of the supremacy of love and sympathy. The evidence must be taken in connection with the character of the event. In Paul's thought the person of Christ was such that it seemed the highest reason to believe that death could not have dominion over Him.

Against the revival from death and the grave of a mere man there is certainly a vast presump-



his incomparable merit. There is the power of ideas, and there is also the power of events, the force of philosophical theory, and the might of historic fact. One fact verified, indisputable, and understood, to the Anglo-Saxon mind at least, is worth a whole world of ingenious speculation. Newton is a typical English mind. He begins with fact. From insight into the meaning of facts his vast generalizations come. First the fall of the apple; then the mighty law that is reached by it. As typical a mind as America has ever produced is Daniel Webster. The intellectual power of the man was great and it was sound. His reputed utterance on his deathbed respecting the hereafter is a disclosure of his intellectual integrity: "The fact is what I want, — the fact is what I want." To Paul the revival of Christ from the dead was a fact verified, indisputable, indestructible.

2. A comparison of this statement of fact with the Corinthian denial constitutes the second step in Paul's argument. Christ has been raised from the dead: that is the fact. Resurrection of the dead there is none: that is the Corinthian denial. The apostle brings them into juxtaposition. Each is an utter contradiction of the other. Resurrection of the dead there is none: if that proposition is true, Christ has not been raised. Christ has been raised: if that statement is true, the Corinthian denial is discredited.

The apostolic affirmation and the Corinthian cannot both be true. One or the other may, but not both: that is Paul's first remark upon the comparison.

Suppose the denial true, and what follows? Christ is still in the grave. The apostolic message is vain; the faith of Christian men and women is also vain. The apostolic message is vain because it sums itself up in the assertion that God hath raised up Christ. It is false, it is blasphemous, an audacious ascription to God of an act that He has not done. The Corinthian denial overturns the foundations of the Gospel, and forever discredits its preachers. It does more; it makes a delusion of the faith of Christian men and women. They are still in their sins. Their consciousness of forgiveness, of release from an old order of sin and death; their elevation into a new order of righteousness and life; their sense of a Deliverer working mightily within them, and promising them at last love purified, character perfected, and faith lifted into vision, is but a splendid dream. Saddest of all, if this denial holds, those that are asleep in Christ have perished. Those who confessed him to their own hurt and shame, who held to him through every form of social disesteem and distress, who labored in his name with unwearied devotion and ever-brightening hope, who through him claimed citizenship in heaven, and who, when the hour of

death came, hailed it as the consummation and coronation of love, — if the Corinthian denial is valid, this lengthening procession of radiant spirits is a procession, not upward into the skies, but downward into the dust. The Corinthian denial is the representative denial. Its consequence is a dead Christ, a gospel that is a dream and an imposture, a faith that is a delusion, a life that by its fall from the sublimest expectation is of all the most pitiable. Thus the denial runs into its dismal and abysmal consequences. To Paul the victim of a delusion was the most pitiable of men. Facts were against him, and a terrible awakening awaited him. Face the issue, even if it be the eternal night. Do not hide your head in dreamland, and then imagine yourself safe. Better a thousand times mute dialogue with eternal death than life inspired by illusion and falsehood. If death be the serpent and man the bird, giddy with a baseless joy in the presence of the terrible fang, let him dispel the charm, realize the horrible fact, and sink in the monster's throat in the clear and stern integrity of reason. That is Paul. There is not in his whole being one fibre either of physical or moral cowardice ; he is every inch a man, and is able, as few are able, to stand to the issues of fact.

But the denial is not true; Christ has been raised. That single and sovereign instance reveals, as Newton's apple did, a law, — a law of

revival. That law is parallel to another. In Adam all die; in Christ all are made alive. There is a human inheritance, in virtue of which man is perishable, and there is a divine sonship, in virtue of which man is imperishable. We owe a debt to death; we must pay it, and so our bodies sink in the dust. We are in duty bound to God, and so our souls rise into the life eternal. The death and the revival of Christ are the supreme instance of this double law, the law that invests man with mortality, and the law that proclaims his immortality. Christ in his revival is the leader of a mighty host. He is the first sheaf of the ripened grain; the whole harvest is to follow. There is order in this vast procession upward out of death. Christ is leader, and the radiant company follow him rank upon rank. The consummation is, in his prospect, the time when evil shall be no more, when the mission of the Son shall have been gloriously accomplished, when God the Father shall be all in all.

The apostle does not look backward and tell us of the old world; that is not in his thought. No mind can cover all the facts of life; besides, Paul's discussion is too definite and urgent in its aim to allow him to pause in application of his law of revival in Christ to the souls of all who have, in every age of the old world, lived and died. Still, his law is here. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. Here the

relation of every man to the temporal is clear; the relation of every man to the eternal is also clear. There is in man an affinity with the beast that perisheth; there is in him a kinship with the Maker and Preserver of the world. There is a law by which he dies; there is also a law by which he is revived. The revelation of that double law as part of the order of the universe, established before the mountains were brought forth, constituted before the world was founded, is made in Christ. Christ did not ordain the law; he revealed it. God's creation is of men unto death and unto life everlasting; and God's creation is given in Christ's revelation. The order of death is for all; the order of life revived from death and made perpetual is also for all. It is easy for us to believe in the immortality of great men; it is more difficult in the case of the humble soul. I recall the utterance of James Freeman Clarke, at the funeral of that greatest scientific mind that this country has produced, Benjamin Peirce. It was impossible, so Dr. Clarke said, to doubt the immortality of this man's soul, even in the presence of his bier. There was in Professor Peirce such an amazing reserve of intellect, such astonishing force of faculty. He was not simply preëminent in his science; there was force enough in him, genius enough, to have given him a unique place in the whole history of science. Yet the law by which this phenomenal

man died and was revived is the same as that by which the humblest soul in all the world passes through death into life. The hymn sung at the funeral of the man of genius recognized the reach and beauty of that law: —

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto me and rest.'
. . . . . .
"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.
. . . . . .
"I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him."

3. A line of suggestion from analogy and from the nature of the case as to the future or resurrection life, — that is the final step in Paul's argument. The fact of Christ's revival has been established. The Corinthian denial has been refuted. The thesis that resurrection of the dead there is none has been surrendered, and its opposite, that the law of resurrection, reaching all and dominating all, has been illustrated in the revival of Christ, is now in possession of the field. Still, the question comes, How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come? The remainder of Paul's discussion is intended to meet this question; it is concerned, therefore, not with the fact, but with the mode of the resurrection life.

The questioner seemed to the apostle a foolish person, not because the details of the future life are clear, nor because Paul thinks that he is able to reveal wholly the manner of existence beyond death, or imagines himself in possession of anything more than glimpses reached through the great principles of his faith, but because every Christian believer should at once see that there is no limit to the power and love of God. How then can men be saved? With man it is impossible; but with God all things are possible. The Master's thought is the foundation of all Paul's reasonings. Ye do greatly err, said Christ to the Sadducean deniers of revival from the dead, not knowing the Scriptures and the power of God. In the same spirit the apostle speaks: "Thou foolish questioner, thou takest into account neither the law of God's operation in the world, nor the possibilities of his power as shadowed forth in that world."

Consider the resurrection-life in the light of analogy. You sow a grain of wheat: the seed that you sow is not raised; that decays, is decomposed, is destroyed. Still, the life in it does not die. Its identity is maintained. It reappears in a new form, in greatly multiplied power. That "change from seed into corn shows how life may be attained through the medium of death, and how identity may be preserved in spite of a total change of form." [1] This gives a glimpse into the

[1] A. P. Stanley, *Epistles to the Corinthians*, p. 324.

nature of the resurrection life. The dead man does not come forth in his old buried body; that is sown in the grave, and as an organization ceases to be. But the life that was in that body does not perish. It rises out of the decaying organization, as the corn does out of the decomposed seed. It persists, and gathers to itself a new form, one in the likeness of that which it has laid aside, even as the corn keeps the type of the seed; still, through the change of body, the imperishable life attains an increase in power but faintly suggested by the multiplication of the seed in the harvest. This is the thought carried out in the great words: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." The life in the seed persists although its first body dies, and the soul persists after the death of the body. The life in the seed acquires a new body, and in that new body preserves the type of the original one from which it sprung. The soul acquires a new form, and in that new form retains a likeness to that which is laid in the grave. The life in the seed, through change of organization, multiplies itself a hundred-fold. The faithful soul, through death, attains a life immeasurably increased in character and range. It is life in the spiritual body in contrast to life in the natural. That is the first analogy.

The apostle presents another, going to show how foolish it would be to limit the love and power of God. In this life we are acquainted with a great variety of organizations. There is one organization of human beings, another of quadrupeds, another of birds, another of fishes. If men had never seen any organization other than that of quadrupeds, the form of birds would not have occurred to them. That creatures should be so formed that they could walk and fly, tread the earth with man and mount up through the air and find themselves at home in a sphere inaccessible to him, would have never dawned upon the mind of any one. Antecedent to experience, from the organization of quadrupeds the form of birds could not have been even guessed at. Yet that miracle of organization, and fine art of creation, that thing of beauty which is a joy forever, the flight of a bird, goes on before our eyes every day. Again, if men had seen only the organization of quadrupeds and birds, that there should be fishes would not have occurred to them. Here is life under conditions that would be death to all other orders of life. Here is existence without feet, without wings, in the deep, able to leap and propel itself, and to subsist in delight where all other forms of life would perish; unable to subsist except in this seemingly impossible place. Antecedent to experience, man would never have dreamed of this. We may further affirm that if

a superior being were to view this earth from the skies, and were to behold the various organizations of fishes, birds, and quadrupeds, it would not occur to him from these to imagine an organization finer, more wonderful still, the upright and godlike form of man. Here are feathers: turn them into the hair that is "a very dower of beauty." Here are claws: shape them into the grace and delicacy of human fingers. Here are forms horizontal: make them erect. Here intelligence is the slave: make it the master of the physical organization. What angel would ever have reached that conclusion!

The apostle has a third analogy. Looking away from earth, we find that every heavenly body, every sun and planet and star, has an organization differing from that of every other. In the immensities of space, crowded as they are with innumerable worlds, the Creator has organized matter into forms infinitely various; and reckoning of his power from these, and of his love from the career of Christ, it is the climax of folly to set bounds to the forms that his goodness and might may bring into being. These organizations in the animal and material world do not enable us to guess at or dream of the form of the spiritual body, but they abundantly declare its possibility. With God, therefore, we may leave the unclothed soul; He will give it a body as it shall please Him. From experience we are able to conclude that the possibilities of Divine love and power are endless.

Aside from analogy, there is a line of suggestion as to the form of the future life from the nature of the case. This race of ours has a double beginning. It has its physical origin from the first man, its spiritual from the second man. The first man was born to die, and we share his mortality. The second is the Lord from heaven, and we bear his image. Such as He was after his revival from death we shall be after our revival from death. That wonderful form of light and mystery in which the Lord appeared after death is a hint at the forms we who bear his image and share his spirit shall wear. As He was before death, so are we, subject to pain, to the cross and the spear. As He was after his revival from death, so shall we be. He shall change the body of our humiliation, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. We suffer with Him here in these natural bodies; we shall reign with Him there in forms that are like his transcendent being.

The foundation of the apostle's argument as to the care of the soul at death and after is the infinite power and love of God. As Paul's analogy from the seed and the corn was doubtless suggested by the words of Christ in application to himself, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit," so his rich and wonderful analogy from the vast extent of organization in the animal and material worlds was, without ques-

tion, brought home to him by those other words of Christ, Behold the birds of heaven! Consider the lilies of the field! "But, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"[1] Here is the Master's thought in modern dress, in these lines "On a Peacock's Feather:"—

"In Nature's workshop but a shaving,
Of her poem but a word,
But a tint brushed from her palette,
This feather of a bird!
Yet set it in the sun-glance,
Display it in the shine;
Take graver's lens, explore it,
Note filament and line;
Mark amethyst to sapphire,
And sapphire to gold,
And gold to emerald changing
The archetype unfold!
Tone, tint, thread, tissue, texture,
Through every atom scan,
Conforming still, developing,
Obedient to plan.
This but to form a pattern,
On the garment of a bird;
What then must be the poem,
This but its slightest word!
Sit before it, ponder o'er it;
'T will thy mind advantage more
Than a treatise, than a sermon,
Than a library of lore."[2]

Of Paul's rest in his reasoning and in the faith

[1] Matt. vi. 30.

[2] *Darwinism*, A. R. Wallace, p. 300.

supported by it there cannot be a doubt. Here he lived as in a tent that was liable at any time to be taken down. He asserts even in that case that he knew that his soul would not be left unsheltered. He had a building of God; no longer a "traveler's fleeing tent," but a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In the power of this faith he measured his sufferings, and they were but for a moment; he weighed them, and they were lighter than thistledown. As against the disk of the sun great planets at their transit appear but a speck, as against the weight of the stellar heavens our whole system is but a feather: so when Paul set temporal sorrow over against his eternal joy it seemed but for a moment; when he balanced his life of suffering for Christ against the exceeding weight of glory it was nothing. He felt that God had set eternity in his heart. Thus, in his first trial at Rome, he had a desire to depart, to be with Christ; that seemed more attractive than release, although he was ready for release, inasmuch as his brethren needed him. For him, to live was Christ, and to die was gain. In his second trial, that which ended with the sentence to death, face to face with the inevitable and mysterious change, his words have even more than the old assurance: "For I am already being offered. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,

which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.[1]" Such was Paul's sublime expectation, as with his latest breath he sent it over the world and down the ages.

The centre of this man's life, like that of every normal human being, was a divine personalism. Ideas were not the ultimate reality; they were but views, at best only partial and inadequate, of the Divine Person who constituted the heart of being. Happy is the boy whose life is overshadowed by the lofty and beautiful character of a true mother, and fortunate the girl whose spirit is moulded under the forces of love and reverence inspired by a brave and devoted father. The multitudes of good people live in the strength of the greater personalities. This is the reason for the sway exercised by such men as Maurice and Bushnell, Henry Ward Beecher and Phillips Brooks. The lesser personality is taken up into the greater and there rested, enriched, and under splendid protection and incentive moved onward upon the Highest. Here, too, is the explanation of the great fact of human leadership. Round Newman the man, and Coleridge, and Sir William Hamilton, the various groups gather. The strong, captivating, ruling spirit is the centre of attraction. So with the more exalted genius that has

[1] 2 Timothy iv. 6–8.

formed distinct schools of thought, such as those in France and Germany in modern times, and those of the Porch, the Lyceum, and the Academy in the ancient world. And if this be deemed a weakness, let it be remembered that the most gifted metaphysical mind that the world has known was so completely and sublimely ruled by the great personality of his master that the image of him reappeared upon almost every page of the works that are, for their range and richness and independent strength, the admiration and sacred possession of mankind. The splendid personalism of Plato, the fact that he found rest and inspiration in the greater manhood of Socrates, is something absolutely normal. And as to Socrates himself, the νοῦς of Anaxagoras filled him with a supreme hope, although he was disappointed with the use which that philosopher made of his great discovery. There is reason to believe that the mythology of his country stood to Socrates as a convenient symbol of the Divine Person, and that the effort of his life was to reach this centre of peace and power.

The line of remark indicated above will aid in the more vivid appreciation of the personalism in which Paul rested. Christ filled and transformed the intellect, penetrated and transfigured the feeling, and swayed the will of the apostle with a power all but absolute. He is speaking in a purely literal way when he says that it is

not he that lives, but Christ. Paul stood forth as the voluntary commissioned and conscious instrument of the risen Lord. His brain was the mediating agency of the thought of Christ, his emotive and active powers of his Master's love and beneficent purpose. This utter and rapturous surrender on the part of Paul to the transcendent personality of Jesus gave him a consciousness that could not otherwise have been so absolute of the risen and ascension life of the Lord; and doubtless the apostle meant his argument for those who would accept along with the intellectual proof the spiritual revelation. In the conduct of his discussion, it is not likely that he overlooked one of his most fundamental distinctions, that between the natural man and the spiritual, and he would insist that the product of Christian reason could not be tested aright without bringing to bear upon it the insight gathered from spiritual experience. What does the buried and unsprouted seed know of the blue of the sky, the glory of the sun, and the splendor of the stars! It must rise into a new sphere before it can behold these things; and similarly, the man whose spiritual capacity is latent and unevolved is not yet in the region of God and Christ, and moral order, and the new ways and miracles of the Spirit. He cannot do justice to the discussion of the apostle until the intellectual and the spiritual become equally real to him, and the

immediate experience of spiritual power shall attest the presence of the Divine. He cannot survey the argument as the man who constructed it did until the evidence for the typal and illustrative revival of Christ from the dead is supported by a consciousness that is the product of the ever-present energy of the Lord. If indeed one could become as truly and utterly the instrument of the mind of Jesus as Paul was, there would follow, without doubt, the same immovable conviction that the record of the Gospels concerning the resurrection is the simple statement of fact.

Out of the testimony of history and personal knowledge, and from the certainty of spiritual feeling, Paul constructed his great argument in defense of his immortal expectation. His intention and eager endeavor was to make his expectation that of his generation and the world. He believed that without it there could be no transference of mankind from the animal to the spiritual, no heroism of sacrifice, no fortitude of the kind that the life of absolute worth demands in a world like this, and no consolation such as brave and loving hearts crave and cry out for, and without which they must break in utter despair. To Paul faith in the endless life was essential to the highest morality. He felt that one may as well expect the planets to keep their orbits when the force of gravitation is gone as

to look for souls on the high and storm-swept circles of duty without the constraining consciousness of kindred with the Eternal Mind, and apart from the regulating power of an endless life. It was, therefore, impossible that Paul should not turn his argument into motive, and shape the power and love of God as witnessed in the career of his Master into an incentive to heroism and hope. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord."

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS CHRIST AND IMMORTALITY.

"I am the resurrection and the life." — JOHN xi. 25.

"Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had said this, he shewed unto them his hands and his side." — JOHN xx. 19, 20.

"This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead." — JOHN xxi. 14.

"And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, and was carried up into heaven." — LUKE xxiv. 51.

"And lo, I am with you alway." — MATTHEW xxviii. 20.

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS CHRIST AND IMMORTALITY: FAITH AND FACT.

In his exquisite poem on Sumner, Longfellow passes from the incompleteness of life here to the completeness attained in the hereafter: —

> "But in the dark unknown
> Perfect their circles seem,
> Even as a bridge's arch of stone
> Is rounded in the stream."

But, after all, the "bridge's arch of stone" is "rounded in the stream" only in image, and not in reality. It is the human eye that discovers in the river's heart the other half of the circle, that completes the incomplete. The poet's original and beautiful comparison has, I venture to think, often led the anxious mind to ask, Is the incompleteness of human life in this world completed in some other world only in reflection, imagination, and dream? Where the bridge's arch seeks completeness, we pass from substance to shadow, from reality to illusion. The completeness that we behold is only a thought, not a fact. Is it so concerning the entireness that human life seeks for itself in the eternal world? Is the frag-

mentariness the substance, and the wholeness the shadow? Is the circle fully drawn only in our vision? Are reality and thought in utter contradiction in life, as in the poet's wonderful image?

That question must have recurred again and again, as we have considered the thinking of the supreme minds in history upon the future life. The thought is massive, beautiful, inspiring, infinitely consoling; but is it anything more than thought? Do the hard fact and the inspiring idea anywhere meet? Must man's life in its most radiant form be but the arch of the rainbow, at best only a half circle, wholly in the seen, resting on the horizon here, spanning the sky and resting upon it there, beautiful but incomplete, the glorious child of light and storm yet so evanescent, lifting its curve of divine lines high in the heavens yet a dream of earth, vanishing utterly in a moment, and having no being any more save in the memory of some loving beholder?

These are the questions that must perplex the mind that travels along the stream of thought. There is relief from them only as we travel along another stream, the stream of historic occurrence; only as we see the two streams merging at last in one great river of faith and fact. The two romantic and splendid rivers of the East, the rivers on whose banks the race was cradled, where in the morning of its life it

played, and where it began its conquest of the world, the Euphrates and the Tigris, join and become one before they reach the Persian Gulf. The confluence of these great and independent streams, after so long a course of separateness and solitude, must be an impressive sight. The order of the world would have it so. They must become one, and together go forth to meet the great sea. That may illustrate the union of faith and fact in Jesus Christ. The stream of positive thought upon the question of immortality takes its rise early. The stream of fact, of death and utter disappearance, begins with the beginnings of life upon our planet, and in its course includes the existence of man. Wide apart these two streams roll on. The waters of thought refresh and strengthen life; the waters of fact are the poison of grief, the venom of sorrow. Hardly did the boldest thinker dream that these two rivers should one day blend and flow on together. If, in an hour of unwonted insight, a solitary soul did venture to declare: "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust," [1] the uniform sequence of history seemed in contemptuous disregard of it. In the fullness of time, however, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, and, apart from moral evil, subject to the essential limitations of men, over whom death could not

[1] Isaiah xxvi. 19.

hold dominion, whom the grave could not retain. The order of God would have it so; the configuration of reality made this junction in Jesus Christ of the faith in immortal life and the fact a necessity. In his teaching and experience, — his idea of God and man, and his revival from death, — we find in Christ the stream of thought and the stream of fact, in a union that cannot be broken. In Christ history sides with the loftiest ideas of mankind, the real vindicates the ideal, destiny and will are in eternal accord, what humanity longs for and what God ordains.

Our question then is, What is the contribution, general and special, that Jesus Christ has made with reference to existence after death? In response to this question there are two lines to be followed, — the course of thought and that of fact. There is the interpretation that Christ puts upon God and man, the character of his ideas, the conceptions of truth that he left in the world, the revelation that he made of the order of the universe, the faith that he planted in the world's heart. There is, besides this, the significance of his own career, the bearing upon our question of his personal experience, the import of his revival from death and the grave. The ideas that make immortality credible, and more and more probable, are in Christ carried to their highest, take on a form and a power inapproachable and final. Again, in the experience of Christ

the fact is given, and thus the sublime idea is justified by the sublime event. We must therefore travel along these two lines of faith and fact.

I. Perhaps Christ's most fundamental idea is that of the kingdom of God. If we speak from the standpoint of faith we call it a revelation of the moral order of the universe, and the possibilities of man. If we speak from the standpoint of reason, we say that Christ's idea of the kingdom of God is founded upon thorough insight into the moral order of the world, and adjusted through complete knowledge and sympathy to the needs and capacities of the human race. The grandest conception that has ever entered the thought of mankind is this of the kingdom of God. The phrase was not new with Christ. The idea that he put into the phrase was altogether new. There had been world-empires long before his advent,— the empires of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece; and now, as he appears among men, there is flourishing in all its glory the empire of Rome. Great souls, like Isaiah and John the Baptist, had suggested to them a world-empire whose head should be, not man, but God. The programme which they made for themselves was national righteousness and national prosperity, national surrender to God, and, as a result, authority in his name over the whole earth. Before Christ that was the loftiest ideal of the race. In his hands it undergoes transformation, and immeasurable

expansion. His kingdom is not of this world. His conception is of the reign of the Divine Love in the hearts of men; it is of the filial relations in which men stand to God, and of the brotherly relations in which men stand toward one another, and these ideal relations lifted into gracious and inspired realization in the life of the world. His vision is of God's invisible moral order made supreme in the thought, ascendent in the feeling and benignly authoritative in the will of the race; it is a vision of the fatherhood of God fulfilled in the filial and fraternal life of mankind. His parable of the mustard seed suggests the universal reach of his thought. The kingdom was to be the home of all the homeless, the tree in whose branches all might rest. It was coextensive with humanity. The parable of the leaven shows the spiritual character of Christ's idea. The kingdom was to be an invisible dominion over the souls of men: it was first of all to work its transcendent effects upon the inward life. Universal in reach and spiritual in character, and founded upon the fitness of man in the name of the kingly love of God, such in barest outline is Christ's conception of the kingdom of heaven, the sublimest conception to be found in the whole history of human thought.[1] This kingdom is further defined and illustrated as a paternal kingdom in the three great parables that constitute Christ's defense for

[1] Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 43–62.

his interest in social outcasts. What is right in man is true in God. That is the maxim upon which rest the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. Rich as the shepherd is in his ninety and nine safely folded sheep, yet he is not rich enough to be careless of the solitary wanderer. That he must recover; and when it is recovered, he calls upon his friends to rejoice with him. Rich as God is in the homage of loyal spirits, yet is He not rich enough to be without interest in the solitary sinner. There is joy in the heart of God over the recovery of a single soul. A woman loses one coin out of ten. She sweeps the house diligently until she finds it. She is too poor not to exert herself to the utmost to recover it; and when it is recovered, she looks for the congratulation and happy sympathy of her friends. The loss to God in the wandering of mankind is infinitely less than one to ten, yet is God too poor to allow to perish, without the utmost gracious exertion, the least significant human soul. The father in the parable has two sons. The younger denies the filial relation and the fraternal. He is recovered through the sense of evil and the fadeless memory of a father's home. Home goes with him into the far country; among the swine and the husks is the fair vision of it; and with sad heart and swift feet he at length returns, won by the sense of its permanence and graciousness. The father anticipates the return,

and for shame gives his lost boy honor, for rebuke kisses, for upbraidings the ring and the robe and the festival of victorious love. That is right and inevitable in the human relation; that is true and all-governing in the heart of the Divine Father. Ideas like this make the life without end a moral necessity; for it is inconceivable that such should be the fitnesses of man and such the feelings of God, and yet death be the end of everything.

The second great idea of Christ, if indeed it is second, is that of eternal life. Less familiar to thought than the conception of the kingdom, it will require, as I trust it may reward, treatment somewhat more extended.

The last words of Goethe were "light, light, light." This final expression of the great German has been understood very differently by different men. Some have regarded it as no more than a cry for the light of the sun as the shadows were closing in upon the night of death. Others have seen in it a supreme intellectual aspiration, the longing for truth, the cry for clearness upon the path that leads through the shadows into the mysterious realms behind the veil. Others still have beheld in it the announcement of a fact, the proclamation of a sublime discovery, the ecstatic utterance of the soul over the ineffable presence of divine things. Where there is no decisive evidence from the great speaker himself, men will continue to judge of the import of his words in accordance

with the habit of mind that they bring to the question. To certain minds there is no other light than that of suns and stars. Their world is one vast and overwhelming materialism. To others there is, in addition, the light of intellect turned upon the mysteries of the world. To a third class there is the light of the spirit, the splendor of the unseen, the glory of God. In the absence of all decisive proof from the dying poet himself, each man will judge of his meaning according to what appear to him to be the possibilities of the case.

It is exactly so with the question of eternal life. To the selfish man there is no such life. Human existence is at best only a far-seeing egoism, a refined and highly tempered animalism, and all notion of a reproduction in man of the divine is absurd, a transcendental dream of the imagination, a pleasing but empty poetic fancy. To another man there appears possible the pure scientific impulse, the love and pursuit of truth for its own sake. This does certainly add something to human existence not found in the beast of the field. It adds an element of self-forgetfulness, of supreme regard for the universe as an object of thought, of intellectual disinterestedness and worth. Indeed, the scientific impulse, when it is pure, the desire to know and proclaim the exact and whole fact, is but the intellectual expression of the moral life, and lifts man at once out of the character of a mere self-seeker. But there is in man another

besides the love of truth, and that is the love of goodness, the identification of individual well-being with universal well-being; and when this love of goodness fills the whole soul and controls all the courses of desire and endeavor, that soul has eternal life. There is the animal life, there is the intellectual life, there is the spiritual life; and the spiritual is the eternal life, the life reproduced in time and in the human soul out of the heart of Christ, out of the heart of God.

Like all other great thoughts, this idea of eternal life has a history. In all the best thinking of the world upon human life before Christ, two elements struggle for united and harmonious expression, and never quite attain it, or at least never attain it with assurance and permanence: one is the element or idea of worth, and the other that of duration or everlastingness. The great question of the early seers of the race concerns the worth of life. Their whole noble problem is how to rise above mere sensuous existence; how to get egoism out of the intellect, animalism out of the heart, and caprice out of the will; how to reach a life intrinsically good and having in itself a divine value.

Greek science as represented by Aristotle and Greek philosophy as found in Plato make approaches to the Christian idea of eternal life. The purely scientific life comes near to the Christian conception, because it is a life emptied of all

brutality, set free from individualism, released from every form of self-consciousness except the highest, and carried into a mood where worth and joy are found in the contemplating intellect. Perhaps the most impressive words in all history upon the worth of the intellectual life at its highest are those of Aristotle. Here is this mighty mind, the exact antithesis of the mystic and poetic soul, the consummate expression of the scientific impulse, the completest type of the calm and pure passion for knowledge, seeking in its own way a life above the senses, other than that which the beasts of the field enjoy; a life having worth in itself, and possessing the character of the divine. Significant indeed are his great words about God: "And in Him is life; for the activity of mind is life, and God is activity. And activity pure and absolute is his highest and eternal life. And we say that God is the highest, the eternal being; so that life and duration are continuous and eternal in Him. For this is God." [1] The life of God is thus one of infinite, unbroken, and everlasting contemplation and power; and in man the purely intellectual life is that which is most akin to God. When we ascend to Plato, we find the idea of the best life approaching much closer to the Christian conception. The ideal laid up in heaven was the pattern according to which this great soul tried to understand the world. He too, like Paul,

[1] *Metaphysics*, xi. *Ethics*, x. 8.

sought for citizenship in heaven, and, like the apostle, he dreamed of a divine commonwealth where the righteousness of God should prevail. It is impossible not to feel that he is describing the attitude of his own spirit, in its long, heroic, and beautiful search for the highest, when, in speaking of the true lovers of wisdom, he says: "Now, he who has become a member of this little band, and has tasted how sweet and blessed his treasure is, and has watched the madness of the many, with the full assurance that there is scarcely a person who takes a single judicious step in public life, and that there is no ally with whom he may safely march to the succor of the just; nay, that, should he attempt it, he will be like a man that has fallen among wild beasts, — unwilling to join in their iniquities, and unable singly to resist the fury of all, and therefore destined to perish before he can be of any service to his country or his friends, and do no good to himself or any one else; — having, I say, weighed all this, such a man keeps quiet and confines himself to his own concerns, like a man who, in a storm of dust and spray driven by the wind, takes shelter behind a wall; and when from his retreat he sees the infection of lawlessness spreading over the rest of mankind, he is well content if he can in any way live his life here untainted in his own person by unrighteousness and unholy deeds, and when the time for his release arrives take his

departure with noble hope and with a cheerful and serene mind."[1]

In the Persian hymns there are close approaches to the Hebrew psalms, and many illustrations might be cited of the identification of the highest and true life of man with the knowledge of God. Take this prayer as a single and sufficient example: "Do thou, Ahura Mazda, thyself bestow upon us; and now, as part thereof, do thou grant that we may attain fellowship with thee and thy righteousness for all duration."[2] Here is the explicit, although momentary and uncertain meeting of worth and duration, and the possibility of man's participation in the excellence and everlastingness of God.

If now we turn to the Hebrew Scriptures, we find the idea of which I am speaking gathering greater fullness and distinctness in the literature, and gaining ampler and more consistent expression in the leading characters. All the higher literature of the Old Testament is a plea for the divine life, an endeavor to associate man's existence with God's, to reproduce in this world and in the hearts of men something of the eternal worth and joy. But it is in those wonderful mystic psalms that we discover the higher expression of the idea of eternal life as at once excellence and duration without end. What do the following familiar passages mean?

[1] *Republic*, 496 C. [2] See Cheyne's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 398.

"Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness,
And speaketh truth in his heart."

"Thou wilt show me the path of life:
In thy presence is fullness of joy."

"As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness:
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, in thy likeness."

"How precious is thy lovingkindness, O Lord!
And the children of men take refuge under the shadow of thy wings."

"My soul thirsteth for God, my flesh longeth for thee,
. . . . . .
For thy lovingkindness is better than life."

"Whom have I in heaven but thee?
And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.
My flesh and my heart faileth:
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."[1]

This great conception of eternal life with its mystic combination of excellence and lastingness reappears in the teaching of Jesus, as the whole higher thought of the world reappears, — purified, amplified, grounded upon the deepest relations, clothed with supreme authority and sweetness, and held up as the possible possession, no longer of elect souls merely, but of all the world. Notwithstanding its presence in the world from the beginning, the idea of eternal life comes forth in the teaching of Christ as an original revelation. In this great idea as found in Christ supreme quality and everlastingness are blended with the utmost beauty and sublimity. The words that define this life most briefly occur in

[1] Psalms xv., xvi., xvii., xxxvi., lxiii., and lxxiii.

Christ's prayer to the Father in the closing hours of his ministry: "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."[1] Knowledge here includes the perception of the intellect, the feeling of the heart, and the obedience of the will. Its nearest equivalent with us is experience. Eternal life is an experience of God in the whole being. As a distinct type the Divine life is reproduced in Christ, and the prayer is that it be reproduced in the character of the disciples. It is again said to be the mission of Christ to give this life to the world. God so loved the world, and this love of God is promised through the belief of the intellect, the emotion of the heart, and the obedience of the spirit.

Let us look at it, as it comes before us in several pictures taken from the ministry of Christ. After the revival of Lazarus a supper was made in Bethany for Jesus and his disciples. It was a thanksgiving festival; gratitude to the Master was its supreme motive. There is a rare and gracious beauty in the family picture. There is much that is admirable in the feeling of most of those gathered at the supper. But among all the disciples no one approaches, in truth of perception, in delicacy of feeling, and in homage of act, the service that Mary rendered. The box of precious ointment broken over Christ is, in the

[1] John xvii. 3.

realm of conduct, a work of art; the thought is of the utmost beauty, and the form is of the utmost grace. The life of this disciple is recognized by the Master as akin to his own; and wheresoever the gospel shall be preached, this act in revelation of this disciple's heart, and in illustration of that quality of being that constitutes eternal life, shall be made known. This incident gives us the life eternal as manifested through a gift.

More beautiful still is the picture of the Master washing the disciples' feet before the last supper. The disciples have been in dispute over the chief seats at the table; the dispute has become a quarrel; the disputants have sunk into the life of the animal; the struggle for supremacy that goes on among the lower orders of life is going on among them. It is another example of the individualism, the fierce selfishness, that has made the history of man so often nothing more than the history of a highly evolved animal. Against this animal life Christ sets the spiritual; against the life that seeks, the life that serves. The Master girds himself to wash the disciples' feet. This act has its transcendent meaning here: it reveals through service the life of God, the life of Christ, the life of sovereign worth and everlastingness.

The next picture brings us to the great idea along the avenue of inquiry. A beautiful young

man, full of courtly courtesy, came to Christ on one occasion and asked, "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" The questioner is turned upon himself. "Why callest thou me good?" Your best words denote eternal realities; duty, patriotism, goodness, lead out to the Infinite; your ideals bring you to the heart of God. Follow your aspirations to their highest reach, rise to the supreme significance of your ideals, go with the movement of consecrated speech, and you will discover that eternal life is the life of God. Then keep the commandments, for the life eternal is the life of duty in the historic sense. "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor;" hold all that you have and are for the whole organism of humanity to which you belong; for eternal life is the life of duty in an intrinsic sense. It is the altruistic, the divine life, and rests upon the character of God and the capacity of man; it is the harmony of finite and infinite, the music of the moral spheres, the ineffable bloom of universal rectitude.

The key to this sublime conception lies in the self-consciousness of Christ. It enfolded God; it was a growth under the power of God; its cause and explanation were to be found only in the invisible world. Environment and heredity cannot account for Jesus, the generation from David and the schooling of Nazareth. In his character there is an immediate and supreme

expression of the will of God, and his consciousness is the glorious result of the divine education and interpenetration. You can imagine a perfect spring and summer, but not without the sun. Before you can imagine your perfect seasons, you must think of this globe of ours rolling into the right place in its orbit and keeping in the right relation to the sun. Then, indeed, because of the capacity of the earth, spring and summer must come. The perfect spring and summer of character we find in Christ, and the explanation of the tender beauty and wealth of his life lies in the power of God upon his spirit. He is the reproduction of God in time, the incarnation of God, his realization and revelation in terms of human consciousness, character, and history. The divine world lay round Christ as the atmosphere lies about the earth. He lived and moved and had his being in it. The divine thought went on reproducing itself in his mind, the divine compassion in his heart, the divine power in his will. Behind the color that fills the eye, and the sound that charms the ear, and the sweetness and richness and resistance that delight the other senses, lies the power that works this incessant wonder upon the sensibilities of man. It is but a step into the eternal beyond the mind. Behind the thoughts that crowd the eager brain, beneath the loves that well up in the heart, back of the conscience with its sense of moral reality and the

will with its spiritual power, is the eternal mind whose inspiration gives man understanding. It is but a step into the eternal within and behind the soul. And the eternal within the soul, coming forth in the flash of genius, in the power of character, conquers the eternal beyond the soul, and lays it under contribution to the well-being of mankind. This is the philosophy of all discovery and invention, of all progress in science and government, of all advance in the life of individuals and communities. Up out of the eternal within and behind the genius and the saint and the hero have come the thoughts, the loves, and the powers that have renewed the face of the earth and heaven. The Eternal Mind and Heart rises through the human, and converts the eternal power in soil and sun, in seas and stars, in earth and air, into the mighty instrument of human advance. Between these two eternities Christ lived, — between the eternal power that wrought the incessant wonder of sensuous representation upon his outward sensibility and the Eternal Mind that came in upon his soul in thought and love and character. He was in supreme sympathy with the eternal within and behind him, and that beyond him and his unique and divine consciousness was the utterance of God, the wielding of God upon the souls of men and the powers of nature. His influence was but God at work upon men; his miracles were

but the intelligence and love of God using the power of God as displayed in the outward world. This consciousness of Christ receiving into itself up out of the eternal deeps the wisdom of God, and using this ceaseless income of grace upon man, and upon nature for man, is the key, as I have said, to his sublime idea of the life eternal. It was the thing about which he was most clear and certain; for it was the thing with which he had most to do, and under whose power he lived unceasingly. It was the realization in Him of the truth and grace of God.

The fourth Gospel is the history of this realization and revelation. In that Gospel the advent of Jesus means the incarnation of the Eternal Life, and the whole career of Christ is one continuous and cumulative disclosure of the character of God, the absolute sacrifice. We see the Eternal Life manifested in Christ, winning the hearts of the young men who became his disciples, hallowing the wedding festivities in Cana of Galilee, purifying in kingly indignation the polluted temple, speaking to the Jewish doctors of the mystery of the birth from above, opening to the Samaritan woman the meaning of worship, healing the impotent man at the pool of Bethsaida, vindicating his claim as the bread of heaven against the malice of Pharisees, giving sight to the blind eyes and the darkened understanding, proclaiming himself the Good Shepherd,

weeping with those that weep and bringing the dead back from the grave, receiving from disciples the hospitality of love and gratitude, celebrating the passover with the twelve and instituting the supper that is to become the perpetual memorial of his deathless love, disclosing in his farewell words the inmost heart of spiritual truth, pouring into disconsolate disciples the infinite consolation, commending them and all generations of believers in his kingdom to the keeping of God the Father, going forth to the "agony and bloody sweat," to betrayal, denial, desertion, condemnation, mockery, and crucifixion, and breathing upon the cross, and under the anguish of the blows that nailed him to it, the sublime prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That is the wonderful history of words and deeds, of things said and done and suffered, through which the Eternal Life discovers himself. The fourth Gospel is the continuous and ineffable illustration of the meaning of eternal life. Like an inverted rainbow is the life of Christ from advent to ascension, coming out of heaven and returning to heaven, and revealing in its whole sacred curve the unutterable and adorable loveliness of the Divine Being. That is the conception that Christ has left of the true life of man. It is the rainbow inverted, issuing from above and returning to the skies, in the world but not of it, vanishing at death in the boundless and conserving love of God.

Certain of the more original features of this sublime idea of eternal life as it appears in the teachings of Christ must now be more fully noted and illustrated.

1. Eternal life is the soul conscious of its relationships, human and divine, and living in them with an inspired aim, strength, and fullness. In the teaching of Jesus, personality is the only ultimate and permanent reality. Nature is but the personality of God manifested in a particular way, and the moral order, as seen in the soul and in human history, is but the same personality revealed in another and higher way. In this universe of manifested Deity, the human personality alone has value in itself and constitutes the express image of God. All else comes and goes; the whole sea of being is a passing show, save as personality, Divine and human, is viewed as the permanent seat and centre of it. If we could, by the stroke of some mighty magician's wand, smite out of being all that is accidental and temporal, we should have left the august personal framework of the universe, and we should see all reality comprehended in personal forms and powers. This is the sublime basal thought of Christ. In his vision, the abiding and eternal substance of being is expressed in the original, creative personality of God, and in the derived and dependent personality of man. The life eternal is therefore the personal life of the

absolute love realized in the personal capacity of man. "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." [1] The first thing in this definition is the conscious and happy relation to God. Life is lifted into the infinite Presence, associated with the Divine Being, open to the outflow of his wisdom and grace, interlocked with his purpose and power, held in happy contemplation of his goodness, and gladdened by the wealth of experience and hope coming from God through the fixed and inspired filial relation. The eternal life is first of all the life of a son of God. In Jesus Christ, however, there is, besides the revelation of God, the representation of humanity. We find humanity in Christ, and the knowledge of Christ is the knowledge of humanity. The conscious relation to Christ is the richest relation to mankind. And this aspect of eternal life must be adequately emphasized, — the fullness of its humanity.

These, then, are the two orders of relationship, the divine and the human, the filial and the fraternal, the son of God and the brother of man, in which the soul finds its deepest life. Connection, interrelation, with the divine and human universe means life; isolation means death. The wider the tree can spread its roots and the farther it can extend its boughs, the greater its life. This

[1] John xvii. 3.

is the meaning of the psalmist's beautiful image, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water." The shrub in the desert is out of all relation to the vital forces of the world, and so must shrivel and die. But the same shrub planted by the rivers lives and grows from year to year. Its union with the living forces of nature is the cause of its growth. Its leaf, also, shall not wither; it shall have an enduring and beautiful life. Isolated from the great upper life of God and from the deep humanities, separated from the sunshine of the Divine Spirit and from the richness of human interests, the character cannot possess excellence and beauty; and if it endures, it is only as the dead endure. But the man who is bound by gratitude to God and by love and service to his kind, and who looks upon the world from the elevation of the cross, lives a life of increasing strength and perennial freshness.

The most adequate symbol, and the one most widely used by the supreme spirits in history, for this relational feature of the life eternal is the city of God. Man is nothing, left to himself. He is not man until he becomes a member of a home, a citizen of a state, a communicant in the church of humanity. His essential nature is hidden until he confesses himself a son and brother; until he founds, in fact or in sympathy, a home for himself, and he steps out into a definite, responsible relation to his nation and to his kind.

The individual is thus discovered and realized only through society. He is a personal centre in a network of human relations; and if we tear him from the contexture of being, as selfishness always does, we destroy his essential nature as man, and reduce him again to the brute category from which he is said to have come. Long ago Aristotle said, "Man is a social being," and he who does not construe the individual in terms of domestic, social, and human relationship misses utterly the essential constitution of man. Long before the psalmist had sung, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God," Abraham had gone forth, a dweller in tents, yet seeking a stable habitation, and so a city, other than that founded by the men of Nineveh and Babylon, whose builder and maker is God. What the first Hebrew longed for John saw descending out of heaven; and the gorgeous outline of the mystic city of God, as he beheld it, is but the symbol of the life eternal. The human city is more than splendid avenues, broad thoroughfares, and material structures. It represents the noble needfulness of man to man, the common and precious inheritance from the past, the association of present aims and endeavors, the joint and equal possession of inspiring traditions and ideals, the happy fellowship in thought and work and life. The city of God means the social order set upon the divine foundation of love, and the whole struc-

ture and aim and movement of human life purified and inspired by the indwelling God. The life eternal is first of all a relational life. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel." [1]

2. The eternal life is thus a present possession. This is eternal life, the knowledge of God and humanity as revealed in Christ. John does but represent the deeper teaching of his Master when he translates the meaning of life and death, so far as they concern mankind, out of the physical into the spiritual. "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." [2] According to the profound and beautiful old man who wrote these words, mere existence is not life, nor is the mere extinction of the body, its reduction to the elements of earth and air, death. Life is existence plus supreme quality, and death is existence minus this quality. Here is John true to Christ when all others forsook him and fled, following him into the court of the high priest, watching him with

[1] Hebrews xii. 22-24. [2] 1 John iii. 14.

unutterable sympathy, accompanying him through his mockery and shame with inexpressible love, going with him to the place of crucifixion, and receiving, as he stood there, from the supreme sufferer the last message of care for the beautiful mother, and from that hour adding the august responsibility to the privileges of his discipleship. That is life, — existence raised, enriched, and inspired by an unearthly and boundless love, and wrought over into heavenly excellence and joy. Here, on the other hand, is Judas, covenanting with Christ's enemies that he may betray him; selling his Master, whom he knows to be innocent blood, for thirty pieces of silver; without sympathetic consciousness of all the truth that Jesus had spoken in his presence, of all the works of mercy that he had done, and of all the particular love that he had shown him, going to the garden of agony and betraying his Lord with a kiss! That is death, — existence without love, destitute of worth, dogged by despair and pursued by the shadow of an infinite horror. The man of love is the representative of life; the man of treason is the type of death.

Thus life eternal is a possession for the present, while unconfined to any time or place. And I think there is something profoundly impressive and conclusive, to a noble mind, in the affirmation that the soul filled with beautiful regard for man and burdened with great desires for the world

cannot perish, but must forever go on. Death is no more than an impressive incident in the history of such a soul. It is but a bend in the river round the spur of a mountain. The river is one, all the way from its source to the sea. All the way above the bend it has grown as it descended; every mile of its course has brought it some fresh contribution. Below the bend it is the same stream, only mightier. Above the bend and below, the river is one, and the method of increase is the same. So with the living, loving soul. After the stream of its life sweeps round the great curve of death, we can no longer follow. Still, it was life here, and it is life there. Above the curve it was fed from the unseen Christ; below the curve it is fed from him. It is one continuous unbroken life, with the method of increase the same in this world and in that; one stream above the bend and below; one life here and hereafter. The truth is, the whole New Testament idea of eternal life is that it is non-temporal. It is associated with a bodily organization that grows and decays, that belongs to the order of this passing world; but eternal life itself has nothing to do with time, save as it changes from glory to glory. Its origin is in the immutable character of God, and its seat the fixed and ineffaceable image of God in the human soul; the nourishment of it is the bread of heaven, the ministry of divine realities; its

kindred is the moral and spiritual order of the universe; and its conserver and perfecter is the Holy Ghost. The eternal life is thus the aspect of all being, Divine and human, that stands in direct antithesis to time. It is the reproduction in the human of that which is the victorious contradiction of all change and decay — the moral life of God, the Eternal Love.

"Fly, envious time, till thou run out thy race;
For when as each bad thing thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consumed,
Then long eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When everything that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth and Peace and Love shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him to whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attired with stars we shall forever sit
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time."

3. It must further be remarked that eternal life is the human life realized and inspired. Sensuous existence is not human existence. Intellectual and moral life is not the characteristic and full life of mankind. Communion with the Divine within, around, and above is the complete life. Lay hold upon that which is life indeed, subordinate the sensuous to the intellectual, and the intellectual to the moral, and all to the spirit-

ual, to full and inspired and endless communion with God. That is the sublime imperative both of the Gospels and the Epistles. We touch here upon the deepest meaning of the parable of Dives and Lazarus. The rich man is clothed with purple and fine linen. He walks in the habit of a king. He fares sumptuously every day; but he is without the Divine. And because he is without that, he is in torment. The beggar was able to bear his earthly distress and the world's neglect and scorn because he had the life of God in his soul. When death came, it was but the deeper entrance into the same wondrous life. Tennyson and a friend were walking down the Strand in London, one day, when they paused before a window with pictures of Goethe and Dante side by side. Knowing his passionate fondness for Dante, this friend said to Tennyson, "What is there in Dante's face that there is not in Goethe's?" Swift as light came the fine answer, "The divine!" What is there in Lazarus laid at the rich man's gate that there is not in the wearer of the purple? The divine!

Here we come upon the whole philosophy of our Lord's representation of future retribution. The man who hid his talent in a napkin, the guest without the wedding garment, the builder who founded his house upon the sand, the foolish virgins who had no oil in their lamps, the wicked servants who dishonored their master and slew

his well-beloved son, and the sublime scene of judgment itself in which the inhuman are turned away, all concern the loss of the divine life. How solemn and grand and how sublimely compassionate these representations of future suffering become when we think of them as symbols of that loss of God and humanity, that bereavement of the life of infinite worth and zest against which our Lord would forever secure the soul! The life eternal is under menace from death eternal. Before every man is the possibility of divine excellence, participation in the divine nature, sure of the endless happy years; and the possibility of the life selfish, brutal, godless, and inhuman, the life destitute at once of all worth and joy, and plunging onward in unmeasured courses under the fiery discipline of God. The life eternal is the full realization of the human; the death eternal is the loss of the human in the brutal.

When the sun rises to-morrow morning he will throw into light the city and the cemetery, the habitations of the living and the dead, the world of the active, the gay, and the hopeful, and the graves that are the mute token of the sleep from which there is no awaking. Side by side are these two worlds, and after the obliterations of night every new morning sets them in distinct, sorrowful, and endless contrast. Side by side are the worlds of spiritual life and death. Upon those that hate and those that love, upon those that

exist simply for themselves and those who live for their kindred and their kind, upon those two contrasted orders of human life Christ pours his revealing power. He makes men understand that hell is a present reality, that it is a state of mind, that it is practical atheism and inhumanity; and he makes men see that heaven is also a present power, a condition of the soul waxing into something diviner with the progress of the days; that it is fellowship with God in Christ, communion with saints, and the devout and loving service of mankind. These are the two present worlds of eternal life and eternal death. They are set over against each other as sea and land, as earth and sky, as night and day. They are here, and we are in one or the other; in the loveless, godless, inhuman life, or in the contrasted life of prayer and sacrifice and service.

Beyond these two great ideas of the kingdom of God and eternal life are the utterances of Christ respecting the particular and personal interest of God in each human soul. It reaches to the sparrow; how much more to man! There is his farewell address to his disciples, the explicit utterance about his Father's house, the amazing assertion that if there were no heavenly world and no meeting again of those parted by death, he would have told them. Terrible as it would have been to declare the sad fact, he would still have done it. There is his tender and immortal

assurance to the thief at his side. Death is not a dreamless sleep; it is not even a suspension of consciousness. "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." A fellowship of love in pain is about to be exchanged for a fellowship of love in bliss.

We have now traced in outline and with a free hand the forms in which Christ casts the highest thought of the world. Everything comes to maturity, the morning to the full day. So amazing is this form that the highest thought of mankind has assumed that we may well call it, even from the position of critical inquiry, revelation. The first minds in all history have been aware of this view of things, have here and there caught glimpses of it, have with great clearness indicated certain outlines of it; still in their achievements darkness and light have been in dispute. Now comes the Christ, and gives to the highest thought of the world an expression so simple, so comprehensive, so great, that it identifies itself with the constitution of the universe, and becomes for all time the revelation of the nature of things. The dayspring from on high has visited us, and in consequence the highest ethical and spiritual thought of mankind has been wrought over into a radiant image of the order of the world.

II. We are thus brought to the fact of Christ's revival from death and the grave. This fact, actual from the position of belief, alleged from the

position of doubt, raises many questions. They are, however, all reducible to two, the philosophical and the historical. If one believes in God, that settles at once the philosophical question. If God exists, he must exist as the master and not as the instrument of nature; nature is in the service of God, not God in the service of nature; God's character is the supreme thing, and not nature's law.[1] On the assumption that God lives and reigns, an assumption necessary for the life of the world, and one all but universally made, resurrection is possible. Theistic philosophy can say no more, and it can say no less and no other. In the supposition that Christ may have risen from the dead, there is nothing at war with possibility.

The question now becomes historical. That Christ was believed to have risen is by competent critics universally admitted. Granting, then, the faith primitive, universal, absolute, the problem is how to account for it. There are many possible ways (as the history of critical inquiry shows) of meeting this problem. Without disrespect to ingenious scholars, they may be reduced to three. The first is that Christ appeared to die, but did not; his apparent death was but a swoon, and his reputed resurrection but the return to consciousness after the temporary lapse. Strauss deals the death-blow to this supposition, if indeed it ever

[1] Bushnell, *Nature and the Supernatural*, pp. 58–62. A. M. Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 336.

stood in need of killing, when he points out the fact that a Christ thus evading death could never have become, for his disciples, the Prince of life.[1] That Christ died and did not rise is the second possible affirmation. Here, of course, we look for a rational and adequate account of the origin of the belief that he did rise, a belief, as I have said, primitive, universal, absolute. It is aside from my purpose to go through the wearisome theories variously termed phantasmal and visional, by which writers who do not credit the reality or the possibility of the resurrection of Christ, struggle sadly and vainly to account for the primitive and "aboriginal" belief in it.[2] They make sad work with the New Testament records, with the character of the witnesses of the risen Lord either for knavery or lunacy, and with the character of Christ himself. They contend for an origin of the sublimest power in history that in no way accounts for it, that is in all respects unworthy of it. The arguments of believers, it is said, have sometimes conducted men to unbelief. On the discussion of the resurrection of Christ, a similar tendency may be observed from unbelief to belief. For a mind without the bias of anti-theistic views of the world, it may be said that a good preparation for faith in the reality of Christ's resurrection would be a

[1] *New Life*, i. 412.

[2] A. M. Fairbairn, *Studies in the Life of Christ*, p. 34.

measure of discipline in destructive criticism. The longer one studies this supreme question, with the support of a theistic view of the world, the more convinced one becomes that the only adequate explanation of the early and "aboriginal" faith in the revival of Christ from the dead, is the historic fact that he was revived. The fact created the faith, and not the faith the fact.

In this connection we must note the character of the person revived. The revival is of one confessedly unique for wisdom and goodness in the annals of the world. It is of one the record of whose purpose and thought and activity has made the impression upon the profoundest students of his entire distinctness in endowment, in character, in mission, from all the other sons of God. That record has wrought into the consciousness of the overwhelming majority of those who may claim to know it best, the conviction of the unique relations that Christ sustained to God and man. The worth of Jesus Christ, his transcendent intellectual and moral greatness, is the first thing to be noted in connection with his revival from death. Christian ethics prepare the way for Christian facts; the infinite worth of Christ, for his revival from death. If he is an amazing exception to the law of death, he is an equally amazing exception to the law of sin. Exceptional in character and errand, why should he not be exceptional in death?

The next remark concerns the character of the witnesses. That they were at first incredulous and ultimately convinced only by the power of fact has often been noticed. That they were simple men and absolute strangers to the genius out of which imposture comes has likewise been duly emphasized. That they had everything earthly to lose by the assertion of the resurrection of Christ has been abundantly recognized; but that they were men trained in the school of Christ, equipped intellectually through the discipline of the greatest teacher in all history, has had altogether too little attention. They were at first ignorant men, but ignorant they did not and could not remain with such privileges. They were indeed fishermen and tax-gatherers, men from the humbler classes; but so have been many of the greatest persons in history. Cromwell, the small land-owner, becomes Lord Protector of England; Washington, the surveyor, the first President of the United States; Disraeli, the Jew, Prime Minister of Great Britain; and the rail-splitter of the West, one of the master statesmen of modern times. Athanasius running wild in the streets, and caught by the bishop of Alexandria playing at church, is sent on his way to the highest intellectual and ecclesiastical authority. Newton is the child of a small Berkshire farmer, Shakespeare's father was a petty merchant, and Milton's a stationer. These names

suggest a multitude of others scarcely less eminent, the contribution of poor, but intelligent and pious homes to the enrichment and guidance of the world. The great majority of the young men in the colleges of the land are the sons of parents in humble life. They go to college ignorant, but after four years of academic discipline they pass out educated men. It is easy and usual to underestimate the intellectual expansion and maturity that came to the crude young men who gathered about Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, and continued with him to its close. Acuteness of perception must have been developed, quickness in detecting real from nominal thinking, a sense of God's order in the natural world and in the moral, a sincerity, a soundness and vigor of intellect altogether new. They came to believe indeed that with God all things are possible, and so far they had an intellectual bias in favor of the historic event. This may be considered a defect; so also may the opposite mood. Indisputable facts of ecclesiastical history respecting the visions and sufferings of saints have been scorned by certain writers until recently, when similar experiences appear under the hypnotic or mesmeric trance.[1] If facts that accord with theism are readily accepted by the theist, it is equally true that facts discordant with naturalism are persistently rejected or explained away by agnos-

[1] Prof. W. James, *Psychology*, vol. ii., p. 593.

tics. There may be a vitiating bias in favor of an event such as the resurrection of Christ, and there may be a vitiating bias against it. The integrity of the intellect is exposed in all men, whether believers or unbelievers. The intellectual integrity of the man who has had the unequaled privilege of a three years' course of discipline under the personal direction and effort of the master teacher of the world, and whose heart has been fixed upon the things that are true and honest, is less exposed, it should seem, than that of any other person. Peter is a typical witness. His greatest sin had been denial of the truth, and that denial had cost him his keenest pain. He is recovered, and to this man, in penitent and passionate devotion to the truth, the risen Christ appears. Peter is too sensible to be imposed upon, and he is too penitent over his recent sin to become an affirmer of falsehood. His character, intellectual and moral, is evidence that his testimony is trustworthy. Peter's character is the character of the other witnesses; his testimony is their testimony. The exceptional character of the person revived from death is followed by the competent character of the witnesses of that revival.

Nor must it be forgotten that the Christian faith is founded upon the fact of Christ's revival from the dead. At the trial of Christ the disciples forsook him and fled. When they beheld

him under arrest and on his way to judgment, they seemed to themselves the victims of delusion. His death dispersed them, as it then seemed forever. They were gathered again, and reunited. What did it? Was it a fancy, or a fact? Further, their character was changed; their past education came to full fruition; the deniers of Christ became his confessors; those who fled from him in his sufferings now rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for his sake. The very men who were vexed with ambitious schemes and tormented with the desire of superiority are now planning for the spiritual good of mankind, are starting an enterprise for the benefit of the world, and stand ready to devote themselves to death in the service of this sublime ideal. What effected this revolution in the character of the disciples? They are reunited and they are changed. Was it a dream, or a reality, that achieved it? Still further, these men are formed into a church; they meet for worship; they undergo wonderful spiritual experiences. Through their representatives, like Peter on the day of Pentecost, they persuade multitudes to join them. Here, then, are some of the questions that only the veritable resurrection of Christ can answer: What reunited the dispersed disciples? What changed them from deniers to confessors, from self-seekers to servants of humanity? What gave them organization and life? Was it not the power of

an event, and was not that event the revival from death of their Master? When we add to this the immeasurable effect of Christianity upon the life of the world, and take into account its immortal freshness, and reflect that the hope of a revival to nations buried under misfortune and vice lies in this great faith; when we behold the new power that it is to-day sending forth to meet the new opportunity, and realize that here in this eternal gospel is the impulse of all improvement and the ground of all high expectation for mankind, it becomes incredible that a fancy and not a fact, a vision and not an event, a dream and not a reality, gave birth to this stupendous enterprise and power. Christ said the house built on sand must fall. If he had built his house on sand, the same fate would have overtaken it. The fact that it stands, and stands to-day where his first disciples, obedient to the guiding impulse of his spirit, placed it, on the historic certainty of his resurrection, shows the foundation of the glorious edifice to be not sand, but immutable rock.[1]

[1] It is indeed a strange exegesis that makes Jesus a witness against his own resurrection. Prof. Edward Caird, in his profound and luminous book on *The Evolution of Religion* (p. 241, vol. ii.), appeals from Paul, who manifestly founds Christianity upon the resurrection, to Jesus, and quotes the words, "they have Moses and the prophets," and remarks that "those who do not believe when they have the immediate evidence of the ethical and religious life of humanity would not even 'be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'" It does seem rather deft work to turn Christ into a witness against the supernatural,

The fact of Christ's revival from death once established, a law of revival as old as death is discovered and certified. Death does not arrest the life of the individual soul, and the form of being in the future is analogous to the form of being here. The Christian idea of the future life is not happily expressed by the phrase, immortality of the soul. Soul stands for the seat of thought, feeling, activity; body for the instrument of manifestation, the passive principle in the service of the active. This is the complete life here, and the Christian idea is that the complete life there will be analogous. Thought, and feeling, and activity will have in the future a mode of manifestation, a form of being, an instrument of service, like that which they have in this world. The Christian revelation thus completes the speculative idea. The thought of the immortality of the soul is but a half thought, and it is beset with the difficulties that always embarrass half thoughts. It is the best that reason can do in the service of

where the point of his utterance is directed toward the sort of unbelief that originates not in the intellect, but in the will, that having come into existence irrespective of evidence is not to be put down by evidence. Though resurrection would be unavailing for such minds, it might still bring "life and incorruption to light" for those who were searching for the higher truth, and longing and yet afraid to believe. If Christ had considered "Moses and the prophets" as enough, or as supplying what he gave only in a higher degree, he certainly would have changed his demeanor and moderated his claims. He appealed to the signs of the times, and the resurrection was the supreme sign.

the greatest of hopes; but it must complete itself through union with Christian fact. After this union, faith in the future life is no longer adequately expressed by belief in the immortality of the soul; it must become belief in the resurrection-life of man.

In addition to discovering and certifying the law of human revival from death, the resurrection of Christ meets a serious philosophical difficulty in regard to self-localization in the hereafter. Memory yields its contents only under fitting and stimulating conditions. The dream of my distant friend disappears on awaking, until the letter from him recalls it; the dream of my dead, until the pictures on my table force from memory the secret. There is nothing more true to mental laws than the assertion that were it not for the familiar walls of the room, the familiar pictures, the furniture, and the garments laid aside the previous night, we should be unable, on awaking from profound sleep, to localize ourselves. We should indeed be utterly lost. Without a familiar object in the environment there would be nothing with which to make connection with our past mental life, nothing with which to build the old life upon the new. It may be said that reminiscence works by contrast. Among the swine and the husks, the Prodigal Son remembers his father's home; in the desert, Israel sighs for the flesh-pots of Egypt; in bereavement, the vanished life is

vividly and fondly recalled. Here, however, the contrast is not absolute. It is set in with conditions of place and time that are substantially the same, and with the old experiences now in unequal proportions. But in the other world, how shall we get our bearings? On the shoreless eternity, to what fixed and shining orb can we direct vision that we may know where we are? The question is indeed momentous, and the ascension life of Christ meets it as no speculation could. Christ is the sovereign of our thoughts here and there, the centre of existence in the present and the future, the shining object by which we localize ourselves in this world and in that, the dear and divine form by which we find ourselves in time and in eternity. This is the significance of that magnificent dream of Richter, in which he finds himself exhausted and lost in the boundless universe. In his lonely and lost condition, "there came sailing onwards," he says, "from the depth, through the galaxies of stars, a dark globe along the sea of light; and a human form as a child stood upon it, which neither changed nor yet grew greater as it drew near. At last I recognized our earth before me, and on it the child Jesus, and He looked upon me with a light so bright and gentle and loving that I awoke for love and joy."[1] So long as the sun shines, the mariner cannot lose himself, on

[1] Quoted from Westcott, *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, pp. 1, 2.

whatever ocean he sails. So long as the Sun of Righteousness continues fixed and resplendent, no soul need lose its way in the pathless eternity. As of the waterfowl, so of the soul: —

> "There is a power whose care
> Teaches thy way along that pathless coast, —
> The desert and illimitable air, —
> Lone wandering, but not lost."

Our generation has had the good fortune to see on two occasions the transit of Venus across the sun's disc. In June, 1874, and in December, 1882, that event, momentous in the history of astronomy and full of lofty wonder for the ordinary observer, took place. Not until June, 2004, and December, 2012, will these amazing events be repeated. Every person now alive on this planet will then be in his grave. To those alive then the observations of our astronomers will be simply the transmitted calculations of dead men. They will be, until verified by that new generation of astronomers, not science, in the most rigorous sense, but faith. One can imagine the expeditions that will be fitted out in those distant years, the splendid fleet of ships, the wonderful astronomical instruments, the new and vast opportunities for the eventful observation. And as the queen planet, shorn for a while of its radiance, rolls upon the mighty disc of the sun, the awestruck observers will declare that scientific faith and scientific fact have met in magnificent accord.

All thinking on the future life is of the nature of calculation. While one remains in the sphere of thought, one remains in the realm of faith. The thought may be a necessity of the reason; still, anterior to experience, it is but a faith that has put on the form of intellectual necessity. Until death is discovered to be only the introduction to a nobler life, until the fact of death is met and set aside by the counter-fact of resurrection, the demonstration is incomplete. This for the first disciples was the august meaning of the resurrection of Christ. The witnesses of it were in the position of our astronomers. They verified the calculation of the preceding highest thought of the world; they vindicated the greatest expectation of the human mind; they matched the inspiring faith with the inspiring fact. Against the solemn background of history they beheld the living event that revealed the purpose of God, the order of the moral universe, the Divine ordination for man. Before their awestruck vision the human dream and the Divine reality rolled into eternal agreement. Their impressive and overpowering testimony has come down to us; and we have our faith supported by the fact to which they witness. With this faith thus inspired and supported, we wait our time. Can we not anticipate the amazed and reverent joy with which, in the hour of death, we shall behold the beautiful faith and the glorious fact roll into a union, silent, sublime, and everlasting?

CHAPTER VII.

TRUST AND IMMORTALITY.

"We bid you to hope." — GOETHE.

"Eternity, which cannot be far off, is my one strong city. I look into it fixedly now and then. All terrors about it seem to me superfluous. The universe is full of love and of inexorable sternness and veracity: and it remains forever true that God reigns. Patience, silence, hope." — CARLYLE.

"The body of Benjamin Franklin, printer, (like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and stript of its lettering and gilding), lies here food for worms; yet the work itself shall not be lost, for it will (as he believed) appear once more in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the author." — FRANKLIN'S epitaph, written by himself.

"I know that my redeemer liveth." — JOB xix. 25.

"Though he slay me yet will I trust in him." — JOB xiii. 15.

CHAPTER VII.

TRUST AND IMMORTALITY: THE GROUNDS OF FAITH TO-DAY.

THE law of history may be contrasted with that of primogeniture, according to which the first born has the greatest privilege and the latest born the least. To simplify the illustration, suppose that the nine children of Victoria had all been sons. The earliest born is the heir apparent, and his sons in succession, heirs presumptive. They and their father, the Prince of Wales, must all die before the succession to the crown can pass to the second son of the Queen; and he and all his must die before it can descend to the third, and not until he and all his issue have become extinct can it go to the fourth; and so on down to the ninth. Thus the hopes of the crown for the nine sons of Victoria rest on a swiftly diminishing probability. The chances are against even the second son. They increase vastly against each younger member of the royal family, until for the youngest there is practically no chance at all.

The law of history is the exact reverse of all this. The first generation has the least privi-

lege, the latest has the most. History is a movement upward in opportunity and power. Copernicus, in the interest of simplicity, substitutes for the notion of the revolution of the sun and planets round the earth the idea of the earth circling the sun with her sister planets. Kepler and Galileo benefit by his discoveries and mistakes, and carry the new astronomy farther; Newton takes up the hints and guesses of Kepler, and extends them to the one sublime force that holds in harmony all worlds; and Laplace and Young, and their successors, correct Newton's imperfect theories and expand and prove them. Thus each astronomer has the advantage of the failure and the success of his predecessor; while the latest comer stands supreme in point of scientific privilege. It is a just complaint of John S. Mill against Sir William Hamilton, that standing as he did on the high vantage-ground of philosophical history, he should have accomplished so little in the way of clearing up the fundamental problems of the human mind. Not only men may, but should

> "rise on stepping-stones
> Of their dead selves to higher things."

All science, all thought, all life is according to this law of ascending privilege and obligation. As in the untitled and purely human home the youngest child is ever the favorite one, so, in the long procession of generations, the latest is

the happiest in opportunity and power. History has her Benjamin no less than the Hebrew father, and the love that has been ripening all through the earlier epochs comes to its best for him. This the philosophical apostle understood when he recognized the divine event that crowned "the fullness of time," and when he referred to the men of his own generation as those upon whom the ends of the world had come. There is more for the scientist, the poet, the philosopher and theologian and Christian believer to-day than at any previous time in history. Behind the mind that believes stand the achievements of the race; back of the soul that wrestles with the question of the immortal life lies the vaster revelation of the order of God. The ground of individual confidence to-day is largely the faith that ages have thought into clearness and lived into character. The indefinable but mighty forces of sentiment that have carried mankind into the highest in civilization and into the ideals that are the condition and inspiration of all human progress rise in the heart of the solitary thinker of to-day. History is a river increasing in volume with every mile of its length, and the tributaries that join it nearer and nearer the sea are taken up and swept onward by a current that grows ever mightier. Belief in immortality will one day become inevitable. Inevitableness of belief is the goal toward which history is moving, and we who

live in the present are in the midst of this sublime tendency. Confidence in the increasing world-current is the meaning of taking immortality on trust.

In the experience of Job, trust receives its ideal illustration. That God is on the side of righteousness may be considered demonstrated, while the upright man is prosperous; that he is on the side of righteousness is open to terrible doubt when the good man is plunged in apparently hopeless suffering. But even then this sufferer believes. God is the highest, and to Job it seems best to trust the Highest against all outward evidence, and to disregard even death itself. He has such a consciousness of the perfection of God that in the teeth of all sensible proof he must believe in his loving-kindness; so certain is he that the Highest is no dream that he must cling to Him through all. In his great cry, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," Job transcends the conflict between the actual and the ideal, the vision and love of his heart and the course of his personal history. He cannot at all understand the conflict; he is even terrified by it, and no human wisdom seems adequate to reduce it to peace; but let it rage till suffering end in slaying, even then the cry shall ascend, "Yet will I trust Him." Was not Job right? Two ways were open to him, to say with his wife good-by to God, or to wait the final revelation in sublime confidence. He

chose the second alternative, to trust God against his world, against experience, against death, to trust Him to the uttermost. That mood is both religion and reason.

When it is said that we take immortality on trust, what precisely is meant? Not surely that there is no evidence for faith; much less that all known evidence is against it. I will not say that even then trust would be irrational. The absence of evidence does not necessarily imply that a belief is absurd; the evidence may so far lie hidden and unperceived. Nor does a mass of seemingly opposed evidence make it untenable. Waiting and trusting may be justified by the evidence completed. When Columbus was sailing westward in the hope of finding a new path to the old world, it seemed to his sailors, as doubtless it sometimes seemed to himself, that there was no evidence for his faith; nay, more, that the evidence was against it. But he sailed right onward, believing that when all was known his faith would be justified. The fact proved other than and immeasurably better than his brightest dream. There was a path as he divined, but it lay not only across the trackless ocean, but also across the richest and fairest of all lands. Even on this lowest ground, trust in the immortal life is entirely reasonable. On the extreme supposition that there is no evidence for it, and that all known evidence seems to be against it, the complete revelation may justify

faith. Against the evidence of sense, Copernicus guessed that the sun does not circle the earth, but the earth the sun, and that sublime guess has turned out to be the truth. Against the universal and persistent testimony of sense, all the world follows Copernicus. In spite of the witness of death, the soul may be immortal. Even on the lowest ground, things may be, not as they seem, but as we believe.

This, however, is not what I mean by trust and immortality. When we take the deathless life on trust, we have under our feet the most stable things within the compass of human experience: the conscience, the ideals that are the condition of the world's advance, the highest in history, and the highest in the universe, — the character of God. The proof of our immortality is not complete; but the evidence for it is so great that it would be an outrage upon life not to honor it with credence. When we ask for trust here, we ask for no more than is demanded in almost all other departments of practical interest. There are people who seem to think trust and rational activity incompatible. This surely is an error. The earth rolls through space and carries its atmosphere with it; the atmosphere does not impede its progress, but makes it a living and beautiful world. Critical activity carried on in the heart of trust is fruitful and inspiring; carried on apart from this mood it is dead. Others contend that

trust is the last resort, and agree with the famous passenger at sea, who when assured that there was nothing to be done in the rising storm but to trust God, exclaimed, "Has it come to that!" Rational life, such as we have, begins and goes on in this attitude of mind. We take our faculties on trust. Two friends believe that they see each other. Why may not this be a dream? How do they know that they are not asleep, and that this experience of theirs is but the baseless fabric of a vision? Consciousness assures them that they are awake, and they believe it. The senses report color and sound, and we accept the report without question. Knowledge thus begins in faith. Twice two make four; two straight lines cannot inclose a space; one cannot be alive and dead at the same time and in the same sense. These propositions are self-evident, but self-evident to what? To reason, of course, but reason may be all wrong, a distorted mirror of reality; and we must therefore take it on trust. Nothing is more clear or certain than personal identity, given as it is through consciousness immediate and recollected; but it rests upon the credence which a man puts in the powers of his mind. I correct my senses, my reasonings, my memory; and fallible in all my faculties, I yet give credence to all.

Pursuing the illustration, I may ask why I trust my friends? Because I know all their feelings and purposes and possible inclinations? No, but

because I have concluded from limited trial and insight to take them on faith. The home, the most momentous of all human institutions, is founded not upon proof, but upon trust. There can be no demonstration of the honor of a husband and wife; nor can there be complete proof to the children of the rectitude of their parents. The great and sacred heart of life is taken on trust. That the same principle holds in the business world, the single instance of the transactions by the telegraph will abundantly show. The message of condolence or congratulation is accepted with implicit belief; yet how impossible it would be, in many cases, of immediate proof. The condition of yesterday's market, the variation in the value of securities, and the amount of business done in the chief cities of the country are reported in the morning newspaper, and upon that report men are ready to buy and sell. Before they could verify one half of it, the basis of business transaction would be worthless. There are few things more impressive in the business world, consecrated as it is in this department to selfish ends, than the faith that is the foundation of it all. The report of the press rests upon that of the telegraph operator, and the report of the telegraph operator upon that of the stock-market. The trust of the average business man is at least three removes from reality. Thus the work of the world goes on.

As an example for the whole social side of

things, take Helen Keller's interesting correspondence with Bishop Brooks. Let any one read Helen's wonderful questions, and still more wonderful descriptions of nature, — that beautiful dream of hers, for instance, in which "God smiled and the world was filled with light, and there was no evil and no wrong in all the world, only love and beauty and goodness,"— and then ask for the grounds for this belief. How complete is the confidence of the community that in these records we have the veritable thoughts of this child of genius. How utterly foreign to any sane mind is the feeling of doubt or suspicion; and yet for this assurance we can furnish no proof whatever. For aught that the average mind can prove to the contrary, it may be all fraud. Those exquisite thoughts may be the teacher's, and not Helen's at all. Bishop Brooks wrote his beautiful letters on trust, and accepted his marvelous correspondent's replies in the same spirit. He and we together were dependent upon the honor of those who knew the approach to the imprisoned soul; and we are perfectly satisfied to have it so. But if it is right for a man to believe in his faculties, his friends, and business associates, and in the honor of the honorable everywhere, is it not also right that he should trust his Maker?

"They that trust in the Lord
Are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever."[1]

[1] Psalm cxxv. 1.

Mount Zion had hold of the solid earth, and the solid earth held it in its grasp, and hence its permanence; and they who put their confidence in God are linked and interlocked with the Immutable Love. Christ and his disciples on one occasion are in a ship on the Sea of Galilee, when suddenly a violent storm beats down upon them. The disciples are terrified, because trustless; but Christ is asleep in the stern, and because he knows that the sea and the waves and the winds and the frail boat are God's, he is able in the heart of the storm to sleep that deep and sweet sleep. It is a window into the soul of the divine man, into the life of supreme confidence in God that he lived.

The conclusion to which we have thus far come is that when we take immortality on trust we simply commit ourselves to the highest. This statement calls for extended illustration.

1. There is the highest in the soul, and when we take the life to come on trust, we rest back upon that. Few that have read the account of the last scenes in the life of Agricola, as set forth in the severe and majestic style of his great biographer, can ever forget the impression of spiritual dignity made by the noble narrative. Of strict and beautiful integrity, of high military and administrative talent, Agricola was a great and good man. His chief public service was rendered as governor of Britain, and during the

seven years of his rule there he rose steadily in authority and fame. The jealous Domitian finally recalled him, and as Tacitus more than hints conspired with the physicians to secure his death. Agricola died in his fifty-sixth year, and his son-in-law, who was absent at the time of his death and who had not seen him for four years previous, became his biographer. Nothing could be more simple, straightforward, and grand than the story of this great writer. His clear narrative as it advances takes on dignity, pathos, and sombre grandeur, and closes in mournful venerative affection, in thankfulness for the splendid character and fortunate life of the dead father; in profoundest regret, in trembling but beautiful hope: "Happy, O Agricola! Not only in the splendor of your life, but in the seasonableness of your death. With resignation and cheerfulness, from the testimony of those who were present in your last moments, did you meet your fate. But to myself and your daughter, besides the anguish of losing a parent, the aggravating affliction remains that it was not our lot to watch over your sick-bed, to support you when languishing, and to satiate ourselves with beholding and embracing you. With what attention should we have received your last instructions, and engraven them on our hearts! Everything, doubtless, O best of parents, was administered for your comfort and honor, . . . yet fewer tears were shed

upon your bier, and in the last light which your eyes beheld, something was still wanting. If there is any place for the departed spirits of the righteous; if, as philosophers suppose, exalted souls do not perish with the body, may you repose in peace, and call us, your household, from vain regret . . . to the contemplation of your virtues which allow no place for mourning."[1]

Few things are grander in that old world fast going into utter wreck than the death-bed of this great ruler and beloved father; than the sorrow, veneration, and hope of this son and biographer. The impression of consequence inhering in the very nature of the dead is irresistible, the feeling that his character, so just and so grand, concerns other worlds than this is inevitable, the hope that his great soul is gathered with the multitudes of the good in some form and condition of being nobler and happier is unquenchable, and the faith that there is a place for the departed spirits of the righteous becomes inseparable from faith in the righteous order of the world. To yield to this impression, to honor this feeling, to cherish this hope, to reverence this faith, is to take the highest in the soul on trust.

2. There is the highest in society; when we accept the future life on trust, we ground our hope upon that. The protection of individual life in liberty and in the pursuit of happiness;

[1] *Agricola*, 45 and 46.

public solicitude for the education of the young; reformation of the offender as a principal end in all penal infliction except in capital cases; and the passion for brotherhood and unity, are among the highest things in society. They set high estimates upon human existence. Besides being essential to all order and progress they contain a philosophy of man's career and being. Life as a divine education; that is perhaps the highest idea in the social thought of the world. It comes in its full strength, no doubt, from Christianity, but it is interpreted and reflected by the influence of a true human home.

The inheritance of reason and impulse and the conflict that ensues between them may serve, and is evidently meant to serve, in the evolution of moral character. The maladjustments in our environment, the many things in it that side with passion and the few great things in it that side with reason, are again in the interest of the grand struggle whose issue may ever be the achievement of moral worth. The uncertainty of sensuous good is the strongest incentive to build for the soul more stately mansions. Sorrow may become a purification. The sternness in life is not that of indifference or fate; it is the wrath of the Lamb, infinite sternness in the interest of infinite kindness. It finds its best illustration in the severity of the wise and loving mother. Who does not remember crises in early life, hours when

moral distinctions were in battle with willfulness and passion, moments when everything worth living for now seems to have been at stake, — truth, purity, and integrity of heart? Who does not recall at such times the fury of a mother's indignation, her implacable hostility to wrong, the majesty of her threatened vengeance, her sublime and terrible wrath? Even so the sternness in life is in the interest of this idea of education; it is the barbed wire of the fence on either side of the narrow way that leads to mature and secure manhood, and its kindness lies in its power to lacerate. There is an abyss of darkness beyond, and the powers that punish preserve character, and guard it against perdition. This idea of life as an education, when it extends itself to the whole race and seeks to find the purpose of history in the moral training of mankind, necessitates as completing it the immortality of man; for this great conception is untenable without the faith that provides an equality of work and wages for all sufferers and martyrs for humanity in the eternal world. In the grand review of the Federal troops in Washington, in May, 1865, the dead soldiers for the Union must look down upon the inspiring scene. Those who sow and pass away, and those who come later and reap, shall somehow and somewhere rejoice together. That is the necessary assumption of the conception of human life as a divine education.[1]

[1] Lotze, *Microcosmus*, Book VII. chapter ii. p. 173.

Another thing of fundamental moment must be noted here. With the advance of civilization, a higher value has been set upon the individual life. In proportion to the growth of society in intelligence and moral sense, and according as it has risen in enlightenment and worth, has it prized more highly its single members. As communities have left behind their brute inheritance and emerged into the light of reason and humanity, and precisely in the degree of their progress, have they set the stamp of preciousness upon man as man. Nor is this by any means the whole of the striking fact. As the race advances, the single member becomes less and less essential, and more and more dispensable. In earlier times individuals were worth more to society than they are to-day. Utility should have made them of more value, their lives more sacred. There is not to-day a great man in any public position or office whose place could not be filled many times, almost equally well. Business men might drop out of their places, lawyers from their partnerships, physicians from their practice, ministers from their pulpits, statesmen from the public service, and the movement forward would suffer no more jar than the express train crossing a switch, or the ocean racer passing from wave to wave. Once the educated men were few, the skilled men scarce, those fit to fill positions of trust rare. In former times the loss of such men was a sad interruption

to progress; but all this has changed. With the advance of civilization, even eminent men are of less and less account. Now the thing to be noted is that along with the growth of this unessentialness of the individual, society has set upon his existence a higher estimate. He has taken on a new utility, a moral essentialness. The farther we get from animalism and the nearer our approach to a full humanity, two things become plainer, the decrease of the individual as a physical and temporal utility and his steady increase as a moral and eternal. The conception of man as a person more and more prevails in advancing civilization, making it impossible that society should in the future reap the enormous material gains that were certain so long as the mass of men were regarded as tools and chattels. Yet, notwithstanding this vast loss to society from the presence of the new idea, the single life has become unspeakably more important. Where this movement will end, no one can foresee; but there is an amazing inspiration in the fact, that with the march of mankind out of the lower into the higher life the concern for the individual should become so great. It looks as if society were preparing to become the prophet of the Lord, the spokesman of the Infinite as to the worth of the soul; and that we must turn from the wastes of nature, so careless both of type and member, to the increasingly tender and conserving heart of

humanity for the purpose and judgment of God. At least, let the fact be duly considered that more and more society is happy only in the happiness of its single members. The East End of London is a horror to the West, the Five Points of New York to the upper city, the slums in Boston to its comfortable and respectable citizens. All this makes belief in immortality more credible. A future life only for elect souls, for the great and good and for none other, for those alone who have climbed into extraordinary likeness to the Lord, would be a future life of horror. How could they live, while their thought turned to the nameless multitudes gone out in death and sleeping in the dust of the earth! How could they ever exult and sing the new song of eternal triumph, while the weak and the erring, the needy and the sorrowful lay buried in everlasting oblivion! Their hearts would break in the presence of God, and heaven would become a house of lamentation, if these privileged souls should find themselves in life and all the unfortunate multitudes shut forever within the realm of death. The survival of the fittest, and the application of this law of brute life to humanity, that certain short-sighted writers are so fond of making, ends in this horror. It sets at naught the central meaning of the Incarnation as the coming of the Infinite to seek and save the lost; and instead of the sublime morality of the apostle, when he declares, "We that are

strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves,"[1] it gives the ethics of animal evolution and the code gathered from the brute struggle for existence, and not only makes this the standard for man but also invests it with the sovereignty of the universe. Under this conception a few toil up to the higher plane of everlasting life, while the uncounted multitudes sink back into the dust and perish. In that case I pity not the mortal, but the immortal; not those who cease to be, but those who continue to live. For theirs must be an eternal lamentation, compared with which the defeat of life and the sleep of death is divine. The truth is, however, that life and the universe construed by the law of brute existence destroys the possibility of disinterested love in man and God alike, and brands the desire of endless being as the worst of infatuations and the hope of it as the wildest of illusions. It is only as we discover in the onward movement a new law making the least morally essential to the greatest, and the worst the objects of an everlasting solicitude on the part of the best, that we discern any basis in society for the greatest of all hopes, or hear any prophecy of the Divine intention to consummate the mightiest of all fulfillments. With this substitution of the human conception for the brutal, immortality does indeed become more and more credible. It urges to the

[1] Romans xv. 1.

interpretation of human life, not downward, but upward. It will not rest this side of the conclusion that men, although utterly insignificant and perfectly dispensable to God as outward utilities, are yet essential to the heart of God, and cannot perish while love is on the throne of the universe.

If this conception shall prevail, it is an easy thing to forecast the time when immortality shall be all but the necessary conviction of mankind. When the idea of human brotherhood has taken full possession of the earth, and the family, the nation, and the race have been wrought over from the sad actual into forms clearly and indubitably possible; when each lives in the vision of the divine order for it, and in the utterance of the eternal ideal through its obedience, every member of the race will be seen to be forever guarded by a power as omnipresent and strong as that which keeps the fine dust of the earth on the planet's surface as it is whirled through space. The difficult thing will then be to doubt immortality, and the spontaneous thing, assured and peaceful faith in it.

3. To believe in immortality is to take the highest in human history on trust. What makes any part of history great is the revelation it contains of the moral worth of man. To look upon that revelation, it is not necessary to confine attention to religious history. The history of patriotism is a record of transcendent human worth. To

believe that life, construed in terms of obligation and expressed in acts of fidelity, and dedicated through tears and blood to great public ends, goes utterly out at death, is to most men impossible. The moral worth is there that makes life transcendent. To take that transcendent life on trust seems to me the clearest and profoundest dictate of the whole higher nature of man.

In the funeral oration of Pericles, as is well known, there is no reference whatever to life after death. The brave men who have fallen in battle are praised through an exhibition of the splendor of the city whose greatness they secured by their sacrifice. The parents of the dead are consoled with the honor of their sorrow. In respect of the future, the Olympian speaker is silent. But in this silence there is a tribute to the dignity of man of great impressiveness. From their subordination to the state, their sacrifice for its perpetuity and honor, the lives of the dead take on a worth and a significance that pass the bounds of thought. Athens acquired her empire and kept her glory because of the men "who knew their duty and had the courage to do it." The state was the common inheritance from the past, the great bequest of the genius and heroism of preceding generations, and the sacred charge of those to whom it had descended. By their devotion it had acquired greater lustre and wider fame. It stood for community of interest, pur-

suit and enjoyment, and became the earthly emblem of heavenly ideals. It was something upon which they fixed their eyes until their hearts were filled with the love of it. Athens was to her best citizens a veritable city of God. It was for this city of God that the brave died; and although the great historian in his version of the speech of Pericles makes no mention of future life for those who died because it was their duty, the stately account that he gives of the reason for their sacrifice is in itself a vast argument for immortality. It is more and better than argument; it is a truthful, unexaggerated, and majestic disclosure of the highest in the life of his time, and sends the mind onward in the assurance that worth is imperishable.

A similar line of remark may be made in reference to another great historic utterance. In the memorable words of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, there is no allusion to life beyond the grave; yet who does not feel that the thought with which the great speaker is possessed is mightier in impulse toward faith in future existence than any direct deliverance upon the subject could be? The ground on which the speaker stands is forever consecrated by the sufferings of the slain. He feels himself in the august presence of duty done, of patriotism recorded in blood, of valor vindicated by sacrifice, of worth attested by death and consecrated by victory. "The brave

men living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." Again, the whole greatness of life issues from fidelity to the state, from individual devotion unto death that the government founded in equality and freedom might not perish from the earth. That great utterance of Lincoln is a disclosure of the highest in the life of our people. It is an association of the individual citizen with national duty that puts upon his existence a sacred and infinite meaning. It is a recognition of the supremacy of conscience, and the preciousness and imperishableness of the love that is given in service and sacrifice for public ends. There is no need in the speech attributed to the Olympian Greek of distinct mention of the immortality of the brave. They died for the city of God as they understood it. There is no need in the utterance of the great emancipator of direct reference to the life beyond time. He stands on a battle-field that has in it more of an eternal than of a temporal import. We see the life of the dead construed in the inspired words of duty and sacrifice, and here as elsewhere we can trust the highest.

4. Finally, to believe in the life everlasting is to take on trust the highest in the universe. On a certain occasion, the experience of the disciples

of Jesus is summed up in these words: "And they went and found even as He had said unto them." They went and found the lowly beast on which their Master was to ride in triumph into the city. They had no proof that He was not sending them on a fool's errand. They went forth on simple faith; but inasmuch as their Lord was the highest, their going was from the beginning justified as a venture in the confidence of the supremely wise and good. Here we have a parable of the whole life of these men, and of all since their time, who have gone hence, believing in the deathless existence. The procedure is warranted by the supreme person that inspired it, and the expectation of immortal life and its Christian ground could hardly find apter expression than in the simple words: "And they went and found even as He had said unto them."

On this principle we are to understand the sublime vision of an early and steadfast believer in the endless life. An old man is in the island of Patmos. In his long life he has witnessed wonderful things; he has seen come and go the three brightest years in the history of the world; the crucifixion and the resurrection, and the organization of a new community, through faith in the risen and ascended Lord. In that community he has witnessed the power of a divine life. He has seen its leaders stoned and beheaded, and still it has grown, until under his venerable sight

it fills the whole known world. It is starting on a fresh campaign, and going forth to vaster and deadlier conflict with the brute forces of the earth. On his solitary island, with the plash and beat and roar of the waves around him, and the great sky over him, this Christian seer had a vision. Before him was the great tribulation, the long and terrible battle of the old world and the new, the spirit of oppression and the power of love. Into this awful struggle the soldiers of God were sent. Rank upon rank, regiment upon regiment, and host upon host, this seer beheld them pass into the dust of the conflict, and disappear forever from mortal sight. But he could not believe that they were utterly lost; he must follow their splendid march out beyond the night of death. The apostle's vision is simply his embodied trust in the highest. The heroism of God's soldiers in this world-raging conflict between good and evil is the summit of human greatness. The Inspirer of the sublime struggle and the Captain of it is the unseen and ascended Christ. Thus the supreme in history leads up to the supreme in the universe. The soul finds its summit in the thought of duty, and society comes to its best in the acceptance of life as a divine discipline, and history reaches its supreme elevation in Christ and the new epoch that he creates, and the universe discovers its sovereign interpretation in the cross. This is the rock upon which

the apostle stands, when he breaks into the immortal prophecy: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." [1]

Another view may be presented of the ground of trust in the endless life. The idea of immortality belongs with certain others that in spite of all hostile criticism keep their place in the consciousness of mankind. This group of ideas overshadows the mental life of the world. The first in the group is the idea of God. Men reason for and against it; one thinker elaborates the proofs, and another the criticism of them; one builds up arguments in demonstration of the Supreme Being, and another tears down. To Berkeley nothing is so obvious or so certain as the being of God; to Hume nothing is more a matter of doubt. But there is a deep below all argument. The really amazing thing is the persistence and inevitableness of the idea of God. Whatever human reasonings may say, here is a notion that cannot be expelled, an idea that maintains its place in the world's consciousness, that is deeper than proof, that lies utterly beyond the reach of hostile thought; something lodged forever in the life of

[1] Revelation vii. 16, 17.

mankind, waiting the awful increase of its power, that it may at last constrain universal and reverent recognition. Nothing in the whole history of human thought is so impressive as this. System after system rises and becomes popular that ignores or makes light of the Divine existence, or that changes utterly his character. These systems often have vast influence, and we see family life conforming to them, and the characteristic thinking of an age taking shape under their power. One would suppose that out of France in the eighteenth century the last trace of the idea of God would be blotted. But, notwithstanding the vast alienation of intellect, this great conception persists, and through the sufferings of the poor, the fears of the rich and the humanity of all, makes its presence manifest, and its authority unmistakable; and as that sad century closes, it kindles a fire into which all its atheisms and cruelties are thrown, and in which all godless and inhuman interpretations of life are burnt up, and out of which the idea of God, as fundamental and immutable truth, comes forth as in a regeneration. Like the struggle of a strong ship upon a stormy sea has been the progress of the idea of God in the consciousness of man. The ship seems so frail, and yet is so victorious; seems so often about to sink, and yet always sinks to rise again; seems lost in a wild waste of waters, and yet is on a sure highway lighted by the ever-

lasting stars; seems confined within the same weary circle, and yet is so certainly moving on. So it is in the consciousness of man with the idea of God. In the world's life it appears a little thing, but in reality it is very great; and we behold it emerging from the abysses of hostile thought into more commanding character, and, although seemingly a hopeless wanderer in a wilderness of animalism, ever keeping to the path of power, and always moving forward upon its own majestic ends.

Another member of this sublime group is the idea of the supremacy of Christ. There are conceptions of his person simpler far than the grand historic conception. Who has not at times been tempted to conclude that Christ was only the mightiest of reformers; no other than the loftiest spiritual genius; nothing but the greatest of the sons of men? Still, the other and rejected conception that he was the supreme revealer of God and the rightful Master of the world has returned, and with all its perplexing complexity could not be driven away. It would not desist from its appeal, but like Peter, after his release, continued knocking. The fittest of the struggling conceptions has survived, and is bound to become an inseparable part of the Christian faith.

Still another member is the idea of obligation. With a smile from Plato, a reverent bow from Butler, and sincere homage from Kant, it has

held its place in the consciousness of mankind against all attempts to expel it. It was born into the world through the act of the man who first beheld the idea of right as limiting the idea of the good, and who, the instant that he saw it, recognized his king and paid him the worship of obedience. The services have been great that the thinkers have rendered who have recognized the idea of moral worth as conditioning and making possible moral experience, and as therefore antecedent to it, yet I am inclined to believe that the conception of duty as distinct from pleasure has been kept in the world through its own power over the human heart. Butler has finely said of it, "Had it strength, as it had right; had it power, as it had manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world;" still the fact that it persists in man's heart, and even partially governs human affairs, shows that it has might, and justifies the modification of Butler's description made by a recent writer of eminence, that right "exists not in word, but in power." [1] It is this power of influential persistence that discovers the reality of moral obligation, as a stern limiting force upon the idea of the good or pleasure. It receives its supreme vindication, not at the hands of moralists, but from the hearts of brave men in the great crises of life. A Spartan under Leonidas, an Englishman under Nelson, an Amer-

[1] J. Dewey, *Outlines of Ethics*, p. 167.

ican under Grant, knows what duty means; and the Christian, trying to repeat in the exigencies of his own career the sovereign revelation of duty made through the cross of his Master, can but pity the poor attempt to dissolve moral obligation in self-interest. Maurice brings men face to face with this self-perpetuating power of moral order and insight, when he ends the controversy between contending schools with an appeal to the sublime fact: "If you have not a conscience, Butler cannot give you one; and if you have a conscience, Paley cannot take it from you." The conception of right with its correlative of duty is one of the immutable forces in the moral constitution of the race.

Among these great ideas, that of the immortality of the soul must be classed. There is no other adequate explanation of the universality of its presence than the confession that it belongs to human faith, and that it is here to stay. To be sure, the universality is not absolute, but the limitation, which would appear to be growing smaller the farther historical research is pushed, only attests the hold upon humanity of the expectation of future existence. Men are not allowed to rest in the notion that they are children of a day. They are pilgrims of eternity, with thoughts that wander through immensity and affections that raven with immortal hunger. They move upon lines that have no end, and when true to their

humanity transcend time. They support their enthusiasms out of the Infinite, and their work, well done, belongs to the universe. Thus faith in immortality lives in the better thought, in the nobler purpose, and in the loftier work of the world; lives on intrenched in the structure of man's being, surviving fear and doubt and open denial, and holding its place in human consciousness against the philosophies that preach the perishableness of the soul as securely as the great fort at the Pillars of Hercules.

The test of time reveals at least what is essential to humanity. Hero-worship has this significance; it reveals the ideas, no less than the characters, that are essential to the life of nations. Peter the Great in Russia, Frederick in Prussia, William the Silent in Holland, Chatham in England, and Washington in America represent ideas. In their respective countries they are revered in proportion to their supposed service to these national ideas. The same thing holds good when one comes into something higher than the national, the human. Whatever endures from age to age, whatever will not die, whatever resists expulsion from the feelings of the race and maintains its sway over the human heart, gives overwhelming evidence that it is true. When, after the rest of the night, the bird wakes, it shakes the dew from its wings; but it does not shake off the wings. The dew may glisten like diamonds; the

tiny beads may hold in their heart the wonders of daybreak; still they are accidental, and are no part of the bird. And so they are shaken off as a mere brilliant hindrance. Not so the wings; while the bird lives, they last. There is the accidental, and there is the essential in human thought. However gorgeous, elaborate, and wonderful the accidental may be, it yet cannot remain; it perishes like the sparkling dew. But the essential, although it may be as incomprehensible as the being of God, as irreducible to the forms of human thought as the person of Christ, as mysterious as the ultimate fact of moral obligation, and as impossible of demonstration as the future existence of the human spirit, — the essential cleaves to the consciousness of man and supports it in movement and life, as the wings support the bird. The essential is the everlasting, and the everlasting is the true.

There is still another and perhaps equally important position from which the subject under discussion in this chapter may be viewed. The contention may be made that the opposition between knowledge and faith, so strenuously insisted upon in our time, is wholly artificial and misleading, and that the true antithesis is between sensuous experience, out of which comes the outward world, and spiritual experience, from which results the world of moral order and life. This is the Biblical opposition: "We walk by faith

and not by sight." There is a kind of knowledge that is rightly described as scientific, and there is another that is truly regarded as the knowledge of faith; and as the senses are the media of intercourse between the intellect and the objective world, so the exercises of the mind upon invisible reality and the confidence reposed in these exertions called faith, lead forth to the spiritual and eternal world. Faith, therefore, in the Biblical sense, is not the negation of knowledge, but a distinct and noble order of it. By this kind of knowledge we rise from the world as a visible temporal effect to the creative word of God; and by it the first real worshiper was distinguishable from his undevout and self-seeking brother. Through this form of knowledge another great spirit of the early times walked with God; and thus the illustrious line of witnesses goes on until in Moses the opposition between sense and faith becomes absolute, and the subordination of outward appearances to inward reality assumes a form forever memorable.

The philosophical objection to this view is that sense is nothing without intellect, that the external world is not given but made; and in the same way the spiritual world is not given in religious and ethical feeling, but created out of these by the constructive reason. This is indeed a perfectly admissible statement of the process of knowing; still it must be added that these worlds of sense

and spirit constructed by the intellect are so constructed under the necessity of reason, and that necessity makes the work of man the order of God. Another form of the objection to this doctrine of two worlds and two sources of knowledge is that sense enters into all our thoughts of the spiritual world, that we are utterly unable to think away the element of sensuous presentation, that abstraction at its highest is never other than an attenuated sensation, and that an image of eye or ear or touch or taste or smell accompanies the intellect on its loftiest flights into the world of pure and divine truth. Now this is the fact. Since Kant did his work, it is plain to every student of the human mind that the Platonic opposition between sense and reason is groundless, a sublime expression of a lofty ethical impulse, but in no way a correct rendering of the law and process of human knowledge. Aristotle saw clearly, at times at least, that sense and understanding must combine to form knowledge, and that from non-sensuous apprehension of the Divine we are, in this stage of our being, absolutely excluded. But that is in no way fatal to the real, although mixed apprehension. For the same may be said of the world of sense. Pure sensation, at all events for a rational being, is an absurdity, since the perceptive and classifying intellect must always accompany it; and that means its transformation at birth from pure sense-feeling into the

character of an idea. If with this mixed character the outward world is still believed to furnish real knowledge and to stand as the alluring and rewarding object of science, it can in no way impugn the reality of spiritual apprehension that it also is mixed. As well deny the substantial character of the human body, because under an illuminated sky it always casts a shadow, and can never break away from the immaterial and ghostly companion that dogs its steps and cleaves to it as part of its being. Sense-feeling is forever shadowed by the constructive reason, and spiritual intuition and reflection always carry in their depths the image from the sensible world. In this mysterious order of existence there is nothing pure and unmixed. Men are compounded of sense and spirit, flesh and reason, body and soul, and the universe, intrinsically one as it is, falls into two parts, — one the object of sense-feeling with its groundwork of boundless wisdom and power, and the other the object of faith with its character of righteousness, love, and eternal life. The sensuous capacity that we present to the universe as outward object is only for a while; it passes away with the death of the physical organism. With the extinction of the sensuous capacity, the whole wonder-world of color and sound and touch and taste and smell must of course instantly disappear like the baseless fabric of a vision; but the wisdom and the power that

are the objective and permanent ground of sensation must remain. What shall happen to the mind that lays hold of the opposing world of truth and love and Divine life when the sensuous accompaniment is done away is in reality the question of immortality. Certain it is that our world lasts, — the moral order, the Divine life; and if this is a present fact to the living man, in the apprehension of which he may steadily grow and with reference to which he may fashion the whole spirit of his being, why should he fail of conscious relation and loving allegiance to this side of the universe when the sensuous capacity, having done its work, is forever taken away? The object of spiritual apprehension is the fixed moral order, the eternal righteousness, the Divine love; and the mind that apprehends has at least a certain measure of invariableness and persistence. The fact of death is but the removal of the image that has both aided and embarrassed the mental procedure as directed upon God, and the bestowment of the freedom of the city of God upon the brave and loyal soul.

With this as the underlying philosophy of death, the question of the future life is first of all that of the assertion of reason against sense, of reality against appearance, of truth against imaginations and dreams. Who the first believer in immortality was we cannot tell, but he must have been a man of genius. He stood, perhaps, by the

bedside of a dying child, and marked the steady progress of disease. Under his anxious look, hungry for every least token of hope, the bloom faded from the cheek, and the light from the eye, and the beloved form went on lessening like the snowdrift under the lengthening spring day. Gradually his child seemed to be wasting away, passing into utter nothingness. Feebler and feebler became the responses of love from the ebbing life; and now every sign of conscious existence is gone, and at last all is wrapt in the cold tranquillity of death. The verdict of sense, the testimony of appearance, is that the personal soul has perished. But while all others remain under the dominion of sense, there is one who refuses to be its slave. He recalls the fact that the soul always was invisible; that love is something that has no form or measure, and makes no appeal to eye or ear; that what was essential and most precious in his child was ever non-sensuous; and in the name of the beautiful soul that for a while spoke to him through the symbol of flesh and blood, he defies the power of appearance and rises into faith in the future life. Something like this must have taken place somewhere in the morning of humanity, and the man who first set at naught the verdict of sense and held to reason was a man of genius. In setting the spiritual order over the sensuous, he initiated the most momentous of all revolutions in the thought of the race.

The validity of this assertion of reason against sense in the case of death is unquestionable when one reflects that the whole higher progress of the world is simply the victory over appearances. How much faith was required in the first sower! He saw, perhaps, the acorns shaken from the boughs and carried by the winds and dropped into the soil; and he waited and watched, and behold, a young forest appeared. He saw the seed of the wild flowers blown into the earth, and after a season it rose out of the earth in virgin bloom; and it occurred to him that he might scatter and plant like the wind, and perhaps the earth would reward his toil. But how much confidence in his observations and in his calculations and reasonings was required for him to take what he sorely needed for food and hide it away out of sight in the soil! The man who sows appears to be wasting his substance; the verdict of sense is that he is a fool; but the counter-assertion of reason is that he is wise, and the victory of reason means the progress of civilization. The ancient world believed that the earth was flat; and so far as the testimony of sight goes, the ancient belief was right. But because reason has set first impressions at naught, the conviction of mankind to-day is that the earth is round. The most amazing of all is the example from the heavens, in the substitution of the idea that the earth and planets revolve about the sun, for the ancient opinion

that the sun and planets circle the earth. As far as appearance goes, the old astronomy was right. All the languages of the world speak of the rising and setting of the sun, and the verdict of the sense-perception of the whole race is in favor of the revolution of the sun round our globe; nevertheless, the universal conviction among educated people is that it is otherwise. What a mighty contradiction of appearance we have here, and what a momentous assertion of the supremacy of reason. Death no more appears the end of life than the sun appears to set, and the declaration that man does not cease to be when he dies is no more opposed to things as they seem than the scientific contention that the sun does not go down. When a man speaks of the hope of the coming harvest, the interest upon the investment that he has made, the return for his expenditure in bringing his business to the notice of the community, and when he declares that the earth is not flat but round, and that it rolls about a fixed and motionless centre, he is engaged in one continuous, persistent, and violent contradiction of appearance. When the same man, standing at the bier of his friend, proclaims his faith in the uninterrupted life of the soul, he is justified by the whole procedure of advancing civilization. He, too, is setting reason against sense, and truth against shadows and dreams. Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment

upon every subject of thought, and upon this of the effect of death upon the soul. We have seen a child look up at the full moon on a clear and windy night, when the heavens were spotted with white masses of drifting clouds, and we have heard it exclaim, "How fast the moon is rushing through the sky!" We found it difficult to convince the child that it was not so. That wild rush forward is not of the beautiful moon, but of the restless clouds. So it may be said to those who are overcome with the appearance of death. It is not the man that is passing away, but his body; it is not the personal soul that is hurrying on to destruction, but its temporal dwelling-place; it is not the stable spirit that is rushing past into utter death, but the sensuous veil through which it has been looking.

Again, faith in the future life is the assertion of love against self-seeking. If sense is our source of truth, self-seeking will be our law of life. This is the case with the lower animals; they all are controlled through their appetites. The only realities for them are the objects of sensuous desire and dread, and hence there can be for them no moral life; that is, the regulation of sense by the unseen force of truth and justice and love. It is much the same with children; they too are governed through their senses, and the toy or the tempting thing to eat is all powerful. But when reason is born, another law than

that of sensuous self-seeking is discovered. There are now two kinds of pleasure, — the moral and the immoral; two ways of obtaining a desirable end, — a right way and a wrong; two contrasted orders of satisfaction, — that of the brute and that of the man. Thus with the advent of reason, moral reality, as the rightful sovereign of outward relations, comes into view. Man now recognizes himself as part of a boundless moral order, — as a member of a home, as a citizen of a state, as belonging to his kind, and as solemnly and sublimely related to the Infinite. Out of these conscious relations come his obligations, and under the august pressure of these he discovers that the law of life for him lies not in egoism, but love. This is the second great battle of mankind; that of the human life against the brutal. How is it supported? First of all by the sense that the victorious struggle against egoism is its own exceeding great reward. The transfiguration of Christ, which I may cite in this discussion as an illustration, is but the consummate expression of the joy and power of life in the spirit. In the presence of this supreme example of the zest of just and merciful living, the world breaks into the cry, "It is good for us to be here." The supreme human life is a disclosure of the unutterable delight of the conscientious and loving heart, an eternal attestation of the infinite superiority of the satisfaction of exalted service over

the violent but mean pleasures of the selfish existence. This is the first incentive in the battle with the brute in man. But there must be another; for the selfish life gains tremendous impulse from the conviction, even the strong suspicion, that death ends all. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, is the standing creed of the world while it believes itself doomed to total extinction at death. Granted that for the pure soul there is immeasurably more pleasure in virtue than in vice, where is the incentive to the spirit infested with hosts of foul desires, and that in order to expel them must go through an agony and bloody sweat commensurate in duration, very often, with existence itself? Immortality is the leverage of righteousness, the power by which humanity is raised out of the depths of habits and vices worse than animal; it is the vast support of the spirit against the flesh, the infinite ally of love against brutality, the necessary and mighty postulate of the true life of mankind.

"Will my tiny spark of being wholly vanish in your deeps and heights?
Must my day be dark by reason, O ye heavens, of your boundless nights,
Rush of suns, and roll of systems, and your fiery clash of meteorites?
'Spirit, nearing yon dark portal at the limit of thy human state,
Fear not, thou, the hidden purpose of that Power which alone is great,
Nor the myriad world, His shadow, nor the silent Opener of the Gate.'"

This seems the proper place for a brief review of the doctrine of conditional immortality; that is, of future existence only for the good, or, as a recent writer puts it in merciful reduction of the test to its lowest terms, for those who make an "effort" [1] at goodness. This form of belief seems to originate in a strange compound of feelings. Underneath the opinion there is manifest the wish to render faith in this mysterious subject less difficult. The endeavor is to ground the hope of future life upon a basis of worth; and in this aspect the doctrine merits the deepest respect, although in the fulfillment of its purpose it seems so short-sighted and indeed utterly misguided. Other feelings, however, besides the noble one just mentioned have their full share, it is to be feared, in contributing to the formation of belief in a restricted immortality. We recognize at once the ghost of the scientific law of the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence. Nature favors the strong and lends her sanction to the extermination of the weak. This law that has such extended exemplification in the animal world, and that in the sphere of the non-rational can be contemplated with equanimity, is introduced as the order for humanity, and we are bidden believe that the Maker of men sides with the strong against the weak, in carrying out of being as on a Niagara current the overwhelming majority of

[1] C. J. Wood, *Survivals in Christianity*, p. 289.

the race. Thus under scientific terms the discarded doctrine of election re-appears in a form that makes the "decretum horribile" of Calvin almost benign, and that would have appalled the stoutest supralapsarian that ever breathed. One cannot but feel, in following the pathway of certain writers on this subject, that the last prayer of the Master of Christendom is peculiarly applicable to their work: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" The doctrine in question is also supported by all those elements in human nature that beget the aristocrat, and that blossom in clique and sect and inhuman class distinctions. From the beginning of history and to the present time there have appeared vast numbers of individuals who considered themselves of superior character, and entitled to immunities and privileges from which the rest of mankind were justly excluded. This disposition finds new and perhaps more audacious expression in the claim of a class to exemption from the merited fate of their brethren, in the tacit assertion of a right to a higher destiny than that provided for the overwhelming majority of the race. Such are some of the spurious and reprehensible feelings that connect themselves with the idea of an immortality only for the good. All that there is of value in the contention may be gathered up in a far nobler doctrine, and since nobler views are in this sphere equal to more probable and credible views, it is important to consider the question in this light.

The characteristic of mankind is an illimitable capacity for improvement together with an indefinite possibility of reformation in the case of those whose existence has been a progressive deterioration; and herein is the essential truth in the idea of worth as the basis of belief in human immortality. To sacrifice this sublime capacity in man, whenever at death it has failed to attain voluntary and conscious realization, would be an impeachment of the supreme wisdom, and furthermore would contradict the very contention of the believer in restricted immortality; for the Being who should disregard a utility so vast could not be trusted to respect values of any kind. There is an essential worth belonging to man in virtue of his capacity for moral improvement without assignable limit, and even in the noblest character this possibility is immeasurably in excess of attainment. Even in his case possibility and not actuality is the consideration that determines his worth.

The opinion under review impresses those who hold it as particularly valuable as motive. On the contrary, it seems to me that in the case of a reasonable being it must have a decidedly discouraging effect. For in the nature of things conditional immortality must be a precarious immortality, and since in proportion as men advance in noble character do they become doubtful of their nobleness and tend more and more to discredit themselves, it would appear that, even in

the case of those most entitled to claim existence beyond the grave, the belief would be an affair so uncertain as practically to be ruled out of the controlling incentives of life. The wise man will least of all grasp a sunbeam when he wants a sword. In the case of the multitude, they would of course surrender the expectation at once, as something altogether too fine for them. The person who would claim for himself this high destiny with the utmost assurance and offensiveness would be the least deserving, — the self-righteous Pharisee, who, although he may "sin with a cart-rope," because he can use with a conscienceless freedom the phraseology of faith finds no difficulty in believing that he is an heir of the incorruptible crown.

But a thing may fail as incentive, and yet vindicate itself as truth. It remains therefore to review briefly the supports of the doctrine in history and New Testament exegesis, in scientific, philosophical, or theological considerations. So far as the belief in future existence has any basis in history, it would be in favor of the continuation in being of all souls good and bad. An unmoral idea of immortality was the earliest form, and that was succeeded by one that regarded human beings in all worlds as answerable to moral obligation. A large view of history seems to justify the conclusion that it was human, and not elective immortality, that was the dream of the early

races. That there is exegetical ground in the teaching of Jesus for the idea that future life is reserved for the good alone, appears so opposed to fact that it is difficult to take the contention seriously. The prodigal son was still a son, and hence the inapproachable power of that parable as an expression of the fundamental idea in the teaching of Jesus — the universal Fatherhood of God. The same truth shines in the Master's controversial argument with the Sadducees. Of the three persons named as living unto God, although they had been dead for more than fifteen hundred years, two at least — Isaac and Jacob — cannot be put down as distinctly and unmistakably worthful characters. The scene of final judgment is another and a complete refutation of the opinion, since the righteous go away into eternal life, and the wicked into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, against whose annihilation there would seem to be no end of present evidence. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus teaches the existence after death of both the good and the bad alike, and it is indeed incredible that such a representation should have been made by a teacher of restricted immortality. The same line of remark is applicable to Paul and to all the apostles. The vice of the line of exegesis under comment is, that it identifies eternal life with existence, and eternal death with non-existence; whereas the evident — one might

almost say the self-evident — purport of the New Testament teaching, especially that in the fourth Gospel and the Epistles of John, is that eternal life is existence plus supreme quality, and eternal death existence minus this superlative fullness and grace. If one is in danger of external sin, one cannot be in danger of annihilation at death.

It would aid the believer in conditional immortality greatly in establishing his opinion could he borrow any light from the region of science, and show that a good character is less dependent upon its brain instrument than a bad one, and that in the case of the former there is a plainly discernible separableness between the mind and its nerve-implement, while in the latter the identification of physical process and psychical power becomes so absolute that when the body dies the soul perishes. But the facts are completely against this hope. The dependence upon physical conditions is as marked and absolute for the just as for the unjust, and the mystery of survival is as great for the saint as for the sinner. Here is the really great difficulty of faith, one that lies against all immortality, and that is no more easily transcended in the case of John than in that of Judas.

The appeal to the philosophical or theological test is equally futile. That worth is necessary to permanent existence is indeed most reasonable to suppose, but that it may inhere in the capacity of

the soul for endless improvement and indefinite possibility of redemption ought to occasion no difficulty to writers who shift the point of value from attainment to effort. There is a soul of good in persons otherwise evil, and there is in the best the residua of the animal. The distinctions between the children of light and the children of darkness, the church and the world, are indeed of supreme importance, but they are far enough from being absolute. They are in fact ideal rather than actual. The characters of men pass into one another by insensible gradations, and omniscience itself would find the task hopeless to discover in one class of persons a ground for continued existence, and in another a reason for annihilation. Some one has put the rather irreverent question as to the difference, wherein it may be supposed to lie, between the last sheep and the first goat in the scene of final judgment. In the case of the Master's sublime parable, it is answered by the imagery employed; since the supposition is that before that tribunal shall take place, character will have put on the decisive form of humanity or inhumanity. But in this world there are no such decided contrasts. The best sheep have still considerable of the goat in them, and the worst goats are never absolutely destitute of the characteristics of their gentler brethren; so that the difference between the last saint and the first sinner, between the lowest successful

candidate for future existence and the highest non-successful one, would puzzle even the mind that could, with Hudibras,

> "Sever and divide
> A hair 'twixt north and northwest side."

And when philosophy studies the question in relation to the Creator, it sees in restricted immortality a frightful waste of being, and a gigantic confession of failure. When one rises to the moral view of the situation, the case is even worse. Here are races with the glorious human capacity for illimitable moral advance, over whom a brute inheritance, seconded by an environment almost destitute of noble appeal or spiritual succor, exercises a terrible power. What do missions mean but the liberation and progressive realization of this high capacity, through the repeal of the law of brute inheritance, and in defiance of the hostile environment; and surely that which men can do, God may be presumed to have both the disposition and the power to accomplish. The idea of an elective immortality is a supreme moral horror, and is in truth the ghastly precursor of universal and utter unbelief; for no one but a monstrous egotist could trust such a Creator as is implied in this view of the government of the world, for future existence, and only the brutally selfish soul would wish life after death on such terms.

This whole parenthetic discussion may be summed up as follows, and in a form that will

bring it into line with the previous course of thought in this book.

What are we to conclude as the fate of those who die in destitution of the higher life of mankind? Since all the thoughts and reasonings gathered into this volume concern, for the most part, only the children of light, what are we to believe about those whom death finds living the selfish and worthless life? Is the future life here commended to faith conditional upon moral attainment, and is death a sort of entrance examination where all who fail of the requisite spiritual standard are thrust back into utter extinction? To this it may be answered that while the outlook upon the hereafter for the selfish soul must be far from happy, and while it is true that the great ideas that underlie the faith of the world in future existence concern chiefly the brave and the loyal among the sons of men, still conditional immortality is as glaringly unphilosophical as it is manifestly unbiblical. For in order to justify faith, one must posit the separableness of the human consciousness or spirit from its brain instrument in this world. If the human soul is detachable as a living conscious personality from the organism of brain in which it here resides, then the detachment is just as applicable to the bad as to the good. The scientific objection to future existence is fatal to neither, or it is fatal to both. The truth is that all believers in

immortality assume a substantial soul in which worth or guilt resides as a moral attribute; and with this assumption the saint and the sinner must alike go on. If it be replied that the universe preserves only what is essential to its existence, then, since bad souls cannot be indispensable, the conclusion is inevitable that the wicked must pass out of being. But the sufficient answer to this objection is the fact that the indestructible capacity for goodness in human beings constitutes for a wise universe an infinite utility, and the prospect of converting the hostile soul into the friendly is abundant inducement, one must think, to bid the unholy continue in existence. Besides, this whole question of immortality is bound up with the sovereignty of righteousness, the omnipotence of love, the absoluteness of God; and if one begins to weed from the ranks of those who are entitled to hope the individuals, the nations, and the races whose moral attainment is almost zero, the horror of immeasurable failure rises up in utter and relentless contradiction of the very ground and pledge of all faith. The idea of conditional immortality seems to me, therefore, one of the weakest and worst devices of timid thought, and one that, if it should prevail, would surely subvert the consciousness of God, the sense of humanity, and all faith in the life everlasting. The fate of all souls is bound up with the character of God, and so we come

back, as the ground of hope for saint and sinner alike, to the great act of moral trust, to reliance upon the invincible ideas in the consciousness of the race, to repose in the reality and benignity of the world given in the life of the spirit, and to confident and happy self-committal to the highest in the human heart, in society, and in history, and in the universe. And here we may say with another and a magnificent believer, "I know him whom I have believed." He spoke of the character of Christ; but for all faith, behind the character of Christ and identical with it, stands the character of God. He has created us to trust Him, and our self-surrender is but the response to his inspiration. The bed-rock of the universe is the faithfulness of God, the foundation of all is the integrity of our Maker; and at our being's height we can do no other and no better than ground our trust upon the immutable promise confirmed by the oath of Him that cannot lie, and thus rest our hope of the life after death upon the truth of Christ and the honor of God.

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